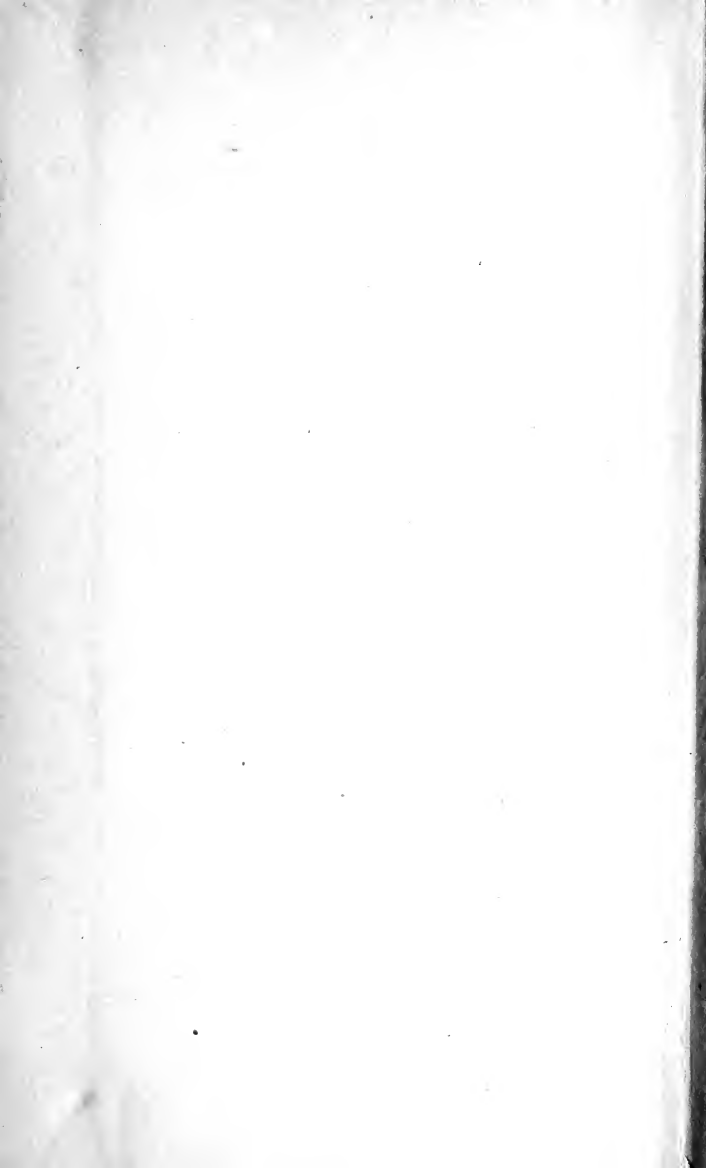


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**ANTHOLOGY OF
IRISH VERSE**



ANTHOLOGY OF IRISH VERSE.

EDITED WITH AN INTRODUCTION

BY

PADRAIC COLUM

Black



BONI AND LIVERIGHT
NEW YORK 1922

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ANTHOLOGY OF IRISH VERSE

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ENGLISH 1



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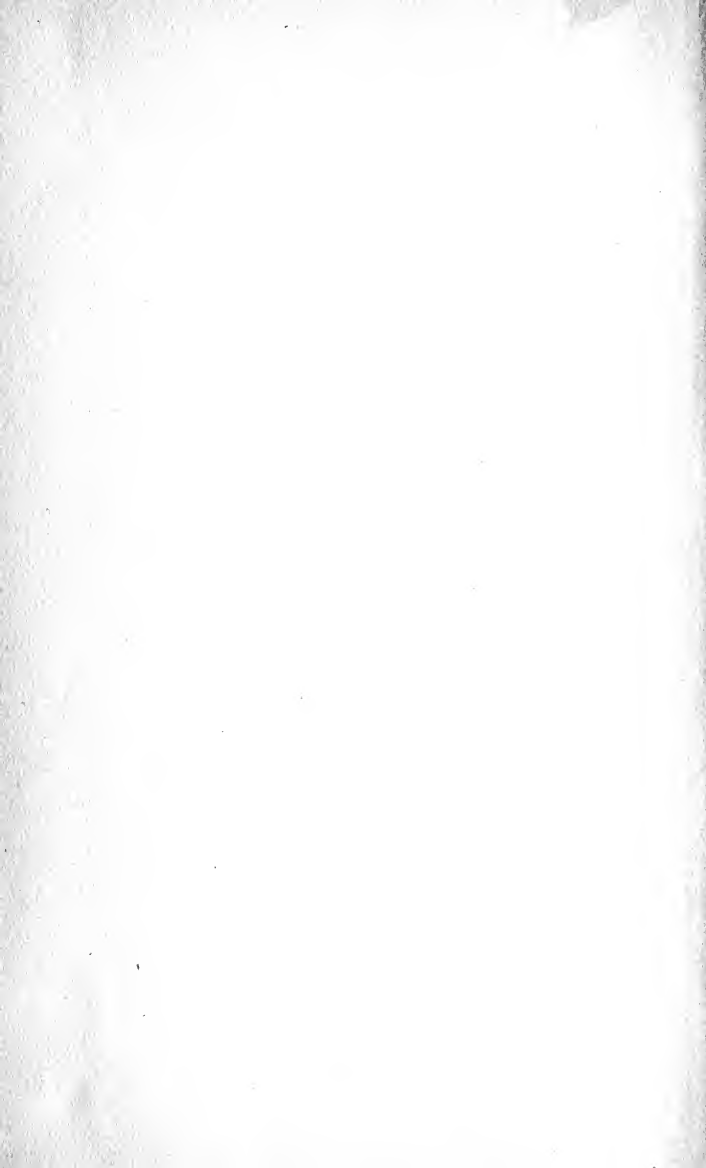
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TO GEORGE SIGERSON, POET AND SCHOLAR

Two men of art, they say, were with the sons
Of Milé,—a poet and a harp player,
When Milé, having taken Ireland, left
The land to his sons' rule; the poet was
Cir, and fair Cendfind was the harp player.

The sons of Milé for the kingship fought—
(Blithely, with merry sounds, the old poem says)
Eber and Eremon, the sons of Milé,
And when division of the land was made
They drew a lot for the two men of art.

With Eber who had won the Northern half
The Harper Cendfind went, and with Eremon
The Northerner, Cir the poet stayed;
And so, the old Book of the Conquests says,
The South has music and the North has lore.

To you who are both of the North and South,
To you who have the music and the lore,
To you in whom Cir and Cendfind are met,
To you I bring the tale of poetry
Left by the sons of Eber and of Eremon.

*A leabhráin, gabh amach fá'n saoghal,
Is do gach n-aon dá mbuaileann leat
Aithris cruinn go maireann Gaedhil,
T'réis cleasa claon nan Gall ar fad.*

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTION	3
PART ONE (THE HOUSE, THE ROAD, THE FIELD, THE FAIR AND THE FIRESIDE)	
A POEM TO BE SAID ON HEARING THE BIRDS SING . . .	23
THE SONG OF THE OLD MOTHER	23
ON WAKING	24
A DAY IN IRELAND	26
A DROVER	28
THE BLIND MAN AT THE FAIR	30
MARKET WOMEN'S CRIES	31
JOHN-JOHN	33
NO MIRACLE	35
LET US BE MERRY BEFORE WE GO	37
HAD I A GOLDEN POUND	38
THE COOLUN	39
HAVE YOU BEEN AT CARRICK?	41
THE STARS STAND UP IN THE AIR	42
DEAR DARK HEAD	43
PEARL OF THE WHITE BREAST	44
COUNTRY SAYINGS	45
COIS NA TEINEADH	46
THE BALLAD OF FATHER GILLIGAN	48
BALLAD OF DOUGLAS BRIDGE	50
THE WHITE WITCH	52
THE SPINNING WHEEL	56
RINGLETED YOUTH OF MY LOVE	58
DO YOU REMEMBER THAT NIGHT?	60
THE SONG OF THE GHOST	62
LULLABY	64
I LIE DOWN WITH GOD	65
PART TWO (STREET SONGS AND COUNTRYSIDE SONGS, MAINLY ANONYMOUS)	
JOHNNY, I HARDLY KNEW YE	69
NELL FLAHERTY'S DRAKE	72
ALLALU MO WAULEEN	74
THE MAID OF THE SWEET BROWN KNOWE	77

	PAGE
I KNOW MY LOVE	79
THE LAMBS ON THE GREEN HILLS STOOD GAZING ON ME .	81
MY LOVE IS LIKE THE SUN	83
THE NOBLEMAN'S WEDDING	85
JOHNNY'S THE LAD I LOVE	86
I KNOW WHERE I'M GOING	87
THE STREAMS OF BUNCLODY	88
LOVELY MARY DONNELLY	89
DRAHERIN O MACHREE	91
A COMPLETE ACCOUNT OF THE VARIOUS COLONIZATIONS .	93
THE BOYNE WATER	95
THE SHAN VAN VOCHT	98
THE WEARIN' O' THE GREEN	100
THE RISING OF THE MOON	101
THE CROPPY BOY	103
BY MEMORY INSPIRED	105

PART THREE (THE CELTIC WORLD AND THE REALM OF FAERY)

AIMIRGIN'S INVOCATION	109
ST. PATRICK'S BREASTPLATE	110
IN PRAISE OF MAY	112
THE SLEEP-SONG OF GRAINNE OVER DERMUID	114
THE AWAKENING OF DERMUID	116
THE LAY OF PRINCE MARVAN	118
THE COUNSELS OF O'RIORDAN, THE RANN MAKER .	122
MY LOVE, OH, SHE IS MY LOVE	123
AT THE YELLOW BOHEREEN	125
THE WOMAN OF BEARE	126
CUCHULLAIN'S LAMENT OVER FARDIAD	129
KING CAHAL MÓR OF THE WINE-RED HAND	130
KINCORA	132
THE GRAVE OF RURY	134
THE SHADOW HOUSE OF LUGH	135
THE KING'S SON	137
THE FAIRY HOST	138
THE FAIRY THORN	139
THE FAIRY LOVER	142
THE WARNINGS	143
THE LOVE-TALKER	144
THE GREEN HUNTERS	146
THE OTHERS	147
THE SHADOW PEOPLE	149
THE FAIRIES	150

PART FOUR (POEMS OF PLACE AND POEMS OF EXILE)

	PAGE
THE TRIAD OF THINGS NOT DECREED	155
THE STARLING LAKE	156
BOGAC BÁN	157
KILLARNEY	159
THE HILLS OF CUALANN	161
ARDAN MÓR	162
CLONMACNOISE	163
THE LITTLE WAVES OF BREFFNY	164
MUCKISH MOUNTAIN	165
THE BOG LANDS	166
THE BELLS OF SHANDON	168
COLUM-CILLE'S FAREWELL TO IRELAND	170
JOHN O'DWYER OF THE GLEN	171
A FAREWELL TO PATRICK SARSFIELD	173
FONTENOY. 1745	176
IN SPAIN	179
IN SPAIN: DRINKING SONG	180
THE BATTLE EVE OF THE IRISH BRIGADE	181
THE FAIR HILLS OF IRELAND	182
THE WINDING BANKS OF ERNE	184
CORRYMEELA	188
THE IRISH PEASANT GIRL	190
THE COUNTY OF MAYO	192

PART FIVE (SATIRES AND LAMENTS)

ON HIMSELF	195
ON AN ILL-MANAGED HOUSE	196
ON THE WORLD	197
RIGHTEOUS ANGER	198
THE PETITION OF TOM DERMODY	199
THE PEELER AND THE GOAT	201
THE NIGHT BEFORE LARRY WAS STRETCHED	204
BRUADAR AND SMITH AND GLINN	207
THE BARD ON THE BODACH	211
A CURSE ON A CLOSED GATE	212
O'HUSSEY'S ODE TO THE MAGUIRE	213
A LAMENT FOR THE PRINCES OF TYRONE AND TYRCONNEL	216
LAMENT FOR THE DEATH OF EOGHAN RUADH O'NEILL	223
DIRGE ON THE DEATH OF ART O'LEARY	225
THE LAMENT FOR O'SULLIVAN BEARE	233
A CONNACHT CAOINE	236
THE CONVICT OF CLONMALA	237

	PAGE
A WOMAN OF THE MOUNTAIN	239
AGHADOE	240
THE BURIAL OF SIR JOHN MOORE	242
LAMENT FOR THOMAS DAVIS	244
PARNELL	247
SYNGE'S GRAVE	249
TO A DEAD POET	251
THE DEAD AVIATOR	252
LAMENT FOR SEAN MACDERMOTT	254
LAMENT FOR THOMAS MACDONAGH	255
LAMENT FOR THE POETS: 1916	256
HOW OFT HAS THE BANSHEE CRIED	257

PART SIX (OUR HERITAGE)

THE DOWNFALL OF THE GAEL	261
LAMENT FOR BANBA	264
TARA IS GRASS	266
KATHLEEN-NI-HOULAHAN	267
DARK ROSALEEN	269
ROISIN DUBH	272
THE DARK PALACE	273
AFTER DEATH	275
WAYS OF WAR	277
THIS HERITAGE TO THE RACE OF KINGS	278
THE IRISH RAPPAREES	279
THE MEMORY OF THE DEAD	281
THRO' GRIEF AND THRO' DANGER	283
THE IRISH MOTHER IN THE PENAL DAYS	284
A SONG OF FREEDOM	285
TERENCE MACSWINEY	286
THE THREE WOES	287

PART SEVEN (PERSONAL POEMS)

I AM RAFERTY	291
AT THE MID-HOUR OF NIGHT	292
NIGHT	293
NEPENTHE	294
EILEEN AROON	295
AND THEN NO MORE	297
MAIRE MY GIRL	298
HELAS!	300
IN THE STREETS OF CATANIA	301
THE DOVES	302

	PAGE
SHEEP AND LAMBS	304
THE PITY OF LOVE	305
THE FOLLY OF BEING COMFORTED	306
THINK	307
IMMORTALITY	308
A FAREWELL	309
TO MORFYDD	310
LOVE ON THE MOUNTAIN	311
ACCEPTATION	312
MAD SONG	313
THE WINGS OF LOVE	314
ON A POET PATRIOT	316
WISHES FOR MY SON	317
GREETING	319
THE SEDGES	320
THE HALF DOOR	321
THIS HEART THAT FLUTTERS	322
I HEAR AN ARMY	323
TO DEATH	324
IDEAL	325
RIVER-MATES	326
THE BETRAYAL	327
THE DAISIES	328
THE GOAT PATHS	329
THE SPARK	331
A SILENT MOUTH	333
HE WHOM A DREAM HATH POSSESSED	334
THE WIND BLOWETH WHERE IT LISTETH	335
THE APPLE TREE	336

SLAINTHE!

SLAINTHE!	339
NOTES	343
INDEX OF AUTHORS	355
INDEX OF FIRST LINES	357

48

22

24

INTRODUCTION

I

I should like to call this an Anthology of the Poetry of Ireland rather than an Anthology of Irish Verse. It is a distinction that has some little difference. It implies, I think, that my effort has been to take the poetry of the people in the mass, and then to make a selection that would be representative of the people rather than representative of individual poets. The usual, and perhaps the better, way to make an anthology is to select poems and group them according to chronological order, or according to an order that has a correspondence in the emotional life of the reader. The first is the method of the Oxford Book of English Verse, and the second is the method of the Golden Treasury of Songs and Lyrics. In this collection,—the last section,—there is an anthology of personal poems that is in chronological order; and there is an anthology of anonymous poems—the second section—that is arranged according to an order that is in the editor's own mind. But the other sections of the anthology are not chronological and are not according to any mental order—they represent a grouping according to dominant national themes.

This method of presentation has been forced upon me by the necessity of arranging the material in the least prosaic way. It would not do, I considered, to arrange the poetry of Ireland according to chronological order. Irish poetry in English is too recent to permit of a number of initial excellencies. Then the racial distinction of Irish poetry in Eng-

lish—in Anglo-Irish poetry—was not an immediate achievement, and so the poetry that would be arranged chronologically would begin without the note of racial distinctiveness. And because so much of Irish poetry comes out of historical situation, because so much of it is based on national themes, the order that has a correspondence in personal emotion, would not be proper to it. The note that I would have it begin on, and the note that I would have recur through the anthology is the note of racial distinctiveness.

II

Ireland is a country that has two literatures—one a literature in Irish—Gaelic literature—that has been cultivated continuously since the eighth century, and the other a literature in English—Anglo-Irish literature—that took its rise in the eighteenth century.

Anglo-Irish literature begins, as an English critic has observed, with Goldsmith and Sheridan humming some urban song as they stroll down an English laneway. That is, it begins chronologically in that way. At the time when Goldsmith and Sheridan might be supposed to be strolling down English laneways, Ireland, for all but a fraction of the people, was a Gaelic-speaking country with a poetry that had many centuries of cultivation. Afterwards English speech began to make its way through the country, and an English-speaking audience became important for Ireland. And then, at the end of the eighteenth century came Thomas Moore, a singer who knew little of the depth or intensity of the Gaelic consciousness, but who, through a fortunate association, was able to get into his songs a racial distinctiveness.

He was born in Dublin, the English-speaking capital, at a time when the Gaelic-speaking South of Ireland had still bards with academic training and tradition—the poets of Munster who were to write the last chapter of the unbroken literary history of Ireland. From the poets with the tradition, from the scholars bred in the native schools, Moore was not able to receive anything. But from those who conserved

another part of the national heritage, he was able to receive a great deal.

At the end of the eighteenth century the harpers who had been wandering through the country, playing the beautiful traditional music, were gathered together in Belfast. The music that they were the custodians of was noted down and published by Bunting and by Power. With such collections before them the Irish who had been educated in English ways and English thought were made to realize that they had a national heritage.

Thomas Moore, a born song-writer, began to write English words to this music. Again and again the distinctive rhythms of the music forced a distinctive rhythm upon his verse. Through using the mould of the music, Moore, without being conscious of what he was doing, reproduced again and again the rhythm, and sometimes the structure of Gaelic verse. When Edgar Allen Poe read that lyric of Moore's that begins "At the mid-hour of night," he perceived a distinctive metrical achievement. The poem was written to an ancient Irish air, and its rhythm, like the rhythm of the song that begins "Through grief and through danger," wavering and unemphatic, is distinctively Irish. And Moore not only reproduced the rhythm of Gaelic poetry, but sometimes he reproduced even its metrical structure.

Silent, O Moyle, be the roar of thy water;
Break not, ye breezes, your chain of repose,
While murmuring mournfully, Lir's lonely daughter
Tells to the night star her tale of woes.

Here is the Gaelic structure with the correspondences all on a single vowel—in this case the vowel "o"—"Moyle," "roar," "repose," "lonely," "woes," with the alliterations "break," "breezes," "tells," "tale," "murmuring," "mournfully." And so, through the association that he made with music, Thomas Moore attained to distinctiveness in certain of his poems.*

* Robert Burns also re-created an Irish form by writing to Irish music in "Their Groves o' Sweet Myrtle." The soldier's song in "The Jolly Beggars" reproduces an Irish form also; the air that Burns wrote this song to may have been an Irish air originally.

Back in 1760 MacPherson's "Fragments of Ancient Poetry Collected in the Highlands of Scotland" was published. That medley, unreadable by us to-day, affected the literatures of England, France, Germany and Italy. In the British Islands eager search was made for the Gaelic originals. There were no originals. MacPherson's compositions which he attributed to the Gaelic bard Ossian were, in every sense of the word, original. And yet, as the historian of Scottish Gaelic literature, Dr. Magnus MacLean, has said, the arrival of James MacPherson marked a great moment in the history of all Celtic literatures. "It would seem as if he sounded the trumpet, and the graves of ancient manuscripts were opened, the books were read, and the dead were judged out of the things that were written in them." Those who knew anything of Gaelic literary tradition could not fail to respond to the universal curiosity aroused by the publication of MacPherson's compositions. In Ireland there was a response in the publication of a fragment of the ancient poetry and romance. "The words of this song were suggested by a very ancient Irish story called 'Deirdri, or the lamentable fate of the Sons of Usneach' which has been translated literally from the Gaelic by Mr. O'Flanagan, and upon which it appears that the 'Darthula' of MacPherson is founded," Thomas Moore wrote in a note to the song "Avenging and Bright." Slowly fragments of this ancient literature were revealed and were taken as material for the new Irish poetry.*

After Moore there came another poet who reached a distinctive metrical achievement through his study of the music

* The Ossian of MacPherson (in Ireland Oisín, pronounced Usheen) was supposed to be the poet who had celebrated the lives and actions of the heroic companionship known as the Fianna. The Irish term for this class of poetry is "Fianaid-heacht," and an example of it is given in this anthology in "Grainne's sleep-song over Dermuid." At the time when "Ossian" was making appeal to Goethe and Napoleon the great mass of the poetry that was the canon of MacPherson's apochrypha was lying unnoted in the University of Louvain, brought over there by Irish students and scholars. Recently this poetry has been published by the Irish Texts Society (Dunaire Finn, the Poem Book of Finn, edited and translated by Eoin MacNeill).

that Bunting had published. This poet was Samuel Ferguson. He took the trouble to learn Gaelic, and when he translated the words of Irish folk-songs to the music that they were sung to, he created, in half a dozen instances, poems that have a racial distinctiveness. Ferguson had what Moore had not—the ability to convey the Gaelic spirit. Take his “Cashel of Munster”:

I'd wed you without herds, without money or rich array,
And I'd wed you on a dewy morn at day-dawn grey;
My bitter word it is, love, that we are not far away
In Cashel town, though the bare deal board were our marriage bed this day.

Here is the wavering rhythm, the unemphatic word-arrangement, that is characteristic of Irish song and some racial character besides. Callanan, too, gets the same effects in his translation of “The Outlaw of Loch Lene”:

O many's the day I made good ale in the glen,
That came not from stream nor from malt like the brewing
of men;
My bed was the ground, my roof the green wood above,
And all the wealth that I sought, one fair kind glance from
my love.

Ferguson's translation of “Cean Dubh Dilis,” “Dear Dark Head,” makes one of the most beautiful of Irish love songs; it is a poem that carries into English the Gaelic music and the Gaelic feeling; the translation, moreover, is more of a poem than is the original.

Sir Samuel Ferguson was the first Irish poet to attempt a re-telling of any of the ancient sagas. He aimed at doing for “The Tain Bo Cuiligne,” the Irish epic cycle, what Tennyson at the time was doing for the Arthurian cycle, presenting it, not as a continuous narrative, but as a series of poetic studies. The figures of the heroic cycle, however, were too primitive, too elemental, too full of their own sort of humour for Ferguson to take them on their own terms. He made

them conform a good deal to Victorian rectitudes. And yet, it has to be said that he blazed a trail in the trackless region of Celtic romance; the prelude to his studies, "The Tain Quest," written in a heady ballad metre, is quite a stirring poem, and his "Conair" manages to convey a sense of vast and mysterious action. It was to Ferguson that W. B. Yeats turned when he began his deliberate task of creating a national literature for Ireland.

With Sir Samuel Ferguson there is associated a poet whom he long outlived, James Clarence Mangan. Mangan was a great rhapsodist if not a great poet. He was an original metrical artist, and it is possible that Edgar Allen Poe learnt some metrical devices from him.* The themes that this poet seized on were not from Irish romance, but were from the history of the Irish overthrow. And what moved him to his greatest expression were the themes that has a terrible desolation or an unbounded exultation—Brian's palace overthrown and his dynasty cut off; the Princes of the line of Conn dying unnoted in exile; the heroic chief of the Clann Maguire fleeing unfriended through the storm; or else it is Dark Rosaleen with her "holy, delicate white hands" to whom all is offered in a rapture of dedication. Mangan incarnated in Anglo-Irish poetry the bardic spirit of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and the sigh that Egan O'Rahilly breathed, "*A mo Thir, A mo Gradh*," "O my Land, O my Love," is breathed through all his memorable poetry. He had the privilege of creating the most lovely of all feminine representations of Ireland, and in "Dark Rosaleen" he has made the greatest, because the most spiritual, patriotic poem in the world's literature. One has to describe the best of Mangan's poems as translations, but in doing so, one is conscious that one has to extend unduly the meaning of the word. And yet, the impulse and the theme has come to him through the work of another, and this not only in the case of poetry he took from Irish sources, but in the poetry that he drew from German and Arabic sources.

Mangan's poems were published in the forties. There was

* Mangan published in the Dublin University Magazine, a publication which Poe had opportunities of seeing. Compare with Poe's Mangan's use of repetitions and internal rhymes.

then a conscious literary movement in Ireland. It went with the European democratic movement, with the coming to consciousness of many European nationalities. At the time the

Finns were collecting their Magic Songs that were to be woven into the enchanting epic of the *Kalavala*, and the Bohemians were making their first efforts to revive their distinctive culture. And the Irish, with their ancient literary cultivation and their varied literary production, might be thought to be in a position to create a literature at once national and modern, intellectual and heroic. Under the leadership of Thomas Davis a movement of criticism and scholarship was inaugurated—a movement that might be looked to to have fruit in a generation.

Then came the terrible disaster of the famine—of the double famine, for the famine of '47 followed the famine of '46. The effect of this national disaster (until the war no European people had suffered such a calamity in two hundred years) was the making of a great rent in the social life. How it affected everything that belonged to the imagination may be guessed at from a sentence written by George Petrie. He made the great collection of Irish music, but in the preface to his collection he laments that he entered the field too late. What impressed him most about the Ireland after the famine was, as he says, "the sudden silence of the fields." Before, no one could have walked a roadway without hearing music and song; now there was cessation, and this meant a break in the whole tradition.

And what Petrie noted with regard to music was true for song and saga. The song perished with the tune. The older generation who were the custodians of the national tradition were the first to go down to the famine graves. And in the years that followed the people had little heart for the remembering of "old, unhappy, far-off things and battles long ago." The history of Ireland since is a record of recovery and relapse after an attack that almost meant the death of the race.

III

That Ireland stirs so powerfully to-day means that a recovery has been made. There is a national resurgence. And as part of the national resurgence there has come that literary movement, beginning in the eighties, which is generally termed the Irish Literary Renaissance.

There are three writers who have each contributed a distinctive idea to this literary movement—W. B. Yeats, George W. Russell, and Dr. Douglas Hyde. The idea that Mr. Yeats has contributed is that of a culture that would be personal and aristocratic. Irish poetry, when he began his work, was in close alliance with political journalism. The Irish political movement had become parliamentary and argumentative, and this spirit had influenced the work of the poets. Irish poetry tended to the hackneyed in form and the impersonal in mood. Mr. Yeats, by devoting his artistic energy to the creation of subtle and beautiful forms, brought a creative idea to the younger writers. He preached to them continuously about discipline, form, personal emotion. In his early volume, "The Wanderings of Oisín," he opened up a fresh world for the poets of the new time—a world where there is nothing but enchantment. And soon he was able to convince the younger poets that they were most racial, that they were most Gaelic, when they were disciplining themselves for the creation of exact forms: Gaelic poetry, it was easy to show, had ever for its ideal the creation of highly-wrought forms.

He insisted that personality was the root of poetry, and

that the expression of opinion and of collective feeling was for the journalists and the political orators. Mr. Yeats is regarded as a mystical poet: he is not mystical, however, but intellectual, and the poems in "The Wind Amongst the Reeds" that has given him the name of being a mystic are esoteric rather than mystical; they belong to the movement that produced the French symbolists. The Irish mind is intellectual rather than mystical, but it is very prone to take an interest in (the words have been used to describe a tendency of the Irish mediaeval philosophers) "what is remote, esoteric, and cryptic." Mr. Yeats, in Irish letters, has stood for the intellectual attitude.

But the poet who has been his comrade in the Art School in Dublin was really a mystic. This was George W. Russell, who was to publish his poem under the initials "A. E." Like all mystics "A. E." is content to express a single idea, and when one has entered into the mood of one of his poems one can understand the whole of his poetry and the whole of his philosophy. In his three books of verse, and in his two books of imaginations and reveries, in his book on economics, "A. E." has stated his single, all-sufficing thought. Men are the strayed Heaven-Dwellers. They are involved in matter now, but in matter they are creating a new impire for the spirit. This doctrine which might form the basis for a universal religion has been put into an Irish frame by the poet. "A. E.," too, has been drawn to the study of the remains of Celtic civilization. He sees in Celtic mythology a fragment of the cosmology once held by the Indians, the Egyptians, the Greeks. And he alludes to the Celtic divinities as if Lugh, Angus, Mananaum, Dagda, Dana, were as well-known as Apollo, Eros, Oceanus, Zeus, Hera.

"A. E.'s" vision is not for all the Irish writers who have come under his influence. But he has taught every one of them to look to the spiritual significance of the fact or the event he writes about. As he is one of the leaders of the Agricultural Co-operative Movement and as he edits a co-operative journal his influence goes far beyond the literary circles.

Dr. Douglas Hyde has written in Gaelic and in English; he has written poems, plays and essays, but it is by his col-

lection of folk-poetry that he has most influenced contemporary Irish literature. He came into contact with the Gaelic tradition, not through books but by living with the farmers and fishers of the West of Ireland.

The Gaelic-speaking population of Ireland had now shrunk to some-out-of-the-way districts along the Western, Southern, and Northwestern coasts. But in the Western districts—in Connacht—this poet-scholar was able to make considerable gleanings. He has published "The Love Songs of Connacht" and "The Religious Songs of Connacht," two sections of a great collection of the folk-poetry of Connacht, and the publication of these songs has been one of the greatest influences on the new Irish literature.*

Dr. Hyde, in translating these Gaelic folk-songs into English, reproduced in several instances the distinctive metrical effects of Gaelic poetry, and showed how various interesting forms might be adopted into English. But the influence of the songs themselves was to transcend any effects of language or verse-structure. The young Irish poets who had been brought up in a culture remote from their racial inheritance were to find in them, not only an intensity and a moving simplicity; they were to find in them, too, a racial spirit, a special character, a country's features. The actuality that is in many of the Connacht Love Songs has been brought into Irish poetry in English.

The Gaelic League which Dr. Hyde was for long president of has had a large and impersonal influence on Irish litera-

* The influence has been exerted not only on poetry, but on the dialogue in the new Irish drama as well. In making literal prose renderings of some of the songs he used the idiom and rhythm used by the Irish peasant in speaking English. Lady Gregory was influenced by Dr. Hyde's discovery in making her versions of the old romances. Mr. Yeats commended the idiom to John M. Synge. Synge's rhythmic and colored idiom is very close to Dr. Hyde's prose versions of the Connacht songs. Here is a verse from one of them—"if you were to see the Star of Knowledge and she coming in the mouth of the road, you would say that it was a jewel at a distance from you, who would disperse fog and enchantment; her countenance red like the roses, and her eye like the dew of the harvest; her thin little mouth very pretty, and her neck of the color of lime."

ture. In 1899 Dr. Hyde ended his account of Gaelic literature with these words: "The question whether the national language is to become wholly extinct like the Cornish, is one which must be decided within the next ten years. There are probably a hundred and fifty households in Ireland at this moment where the parents speak Irish amongst themselves, and the children answer them in English. If a current of popular feeling can be aroused amongst these, the great cause—for great it appears even now to foreigners, and greater it will appear to the future generations of the Irish themselves—of the preservation of the oldest and most cultivated vernacular in Europe, except Greek alone, is assured of success, and Irish literature, the production of which though long dribbling in a narrow channel—has never actually ceased, may again, as it is even now promising to do, burst forth into life and vigor, and once more give the expression which in English seems impossible, to the best thoughts and aspirations of the Gaelic race." Less than two decades after this was written Padraic Pearse was writing his poetry in Gaelic, and creating a new tradition of poetry in that language, and Thomas MacDonagh was declaring in his lectures to the students of the new National University, "The Gaelic revival has given to some of us a new arrogance. I am a Gael and I know no cause but of pride in that. *Gaedhal me agus no h-eol dom gur nair dom é*. My race has survived the wiles of the foreigner here. It has refused to yield even to defeat, and emerges strong to-day, full of hope and of love, with new strength in its arms to work its new destiny, with a new song on its lips and the word of the new language, which is the ancient language, still calling from age to age."

IV

In the second section of this Anthology there is a collection of songs mainly anonymous—the songs of the street and the countryside. These songs are a distinctive national possession, and, in many cases, they have been a medium through which Gaelic influences have passed into English.

Certain traditional songs of the countryside have been passing over from Gaelic into English ever since English began to be used familiarly here and there in the countryside. Not so many, however; very few of the famous Gaelic songs have been changed from Gaelic into English by the country people themselves. But as English became a little more familiar, or Gaelic a little less familiar, translations were made, or rather, transferences took place with the music remaining to keep the mould. Thus a technique that was more Gaelic than English grew up in the country places; and even before scholarship made any revelation of Gaelic literature to the cultivated, an interpenetration of the two literatures was taking place.

These anonymous songs are of two distinct types—the song that has in it some personal emotion or imagining; that comes out of a reverie.

My love is like the sun,
That in the firmament does run,
And always is constant and true;
But his is like the moon,
That wanders up and down,
And every month it is new.

and the song that has in it the sentiment of the crowd:

The French are on the say,
Says the Shan Van Vocht,
The French are on the say,
They'll be here without delay,
And the Orange will decay,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.

The first is the song of the countryside as it is found all the world over, the second is that very characteristic Irish product, the street-song or ballad.

It is the business of the singer of the street-song and of the man who makes the verses for him to hold the casual crowd that happens to be at the fair or the market. The maker of the street-song cannot prepare the mind of his audience for his story, and so he has to deal with an event the significance of which has been already felt—a political happening, a murder, an execution. The maker of the street-song has to make himself the chorus in the drama of daily happenings. He has always to be dramatic:

I met with Napper Tandy, and he took me by the hand,
And he said, "How is poor Ireland, and how does she stand?"

Or:

O then tell me, Shaun O'Farrell, why do you hurry so?

More than any other Anglo-Irish verse product, these street-songs show the influences of Gaelic music and the technique of Gaelic poetry. One finds stanzas the rhythm of which reproduces the distinctive rhythm of the music:

On the blood-crimsoned plains the Irish Brigade nobly stood,
They fought at Orleans till the streams they ran with their
blood;
Far away from their land, in the arms of death they repose,

For they fought for poor France, and they fell by the hands
of her foes.

A stanza of Moore's has been already quoted to show a Gaelic verse-structure, with all the correspondences based on a single vowel. In the street-songs, and the more personal songs of the country-side, made as they have been, by men more familiar with the Gaelic than with the English way of making verse, one often finds the same elaborate and distinctive structure. Take, for instance, the song in the second section called "The Boys of Mullaghbaun," in which all the correspondences are on the broad "a":

On a Monday morning *early*, as my wandering steps did
lade me,
Down by a farmer's *station*, and the meadows and free lands,
I heard great *lamentation* the small birds they were *making*,
Saying, "We'll have no more *engagements* with the Boys of
Mullaghbaun!"

Thus music and the memory of Gaelic verse has left in the Irish country places a technique that is as much Gaelic as English. In not all of them, however; in parts of Ulster, Scots song has had influence and currency.

V

One of the characteristics of Irish poetry according to Thomas MacDonagh is a certain naiveté. "An Irish poet," he says, "if he be individual, if he be original, if he be national, speaks, almost stammers, in one of the two fresh languages of this country; in Irish (modern Irish, newly schooled by Europe), or in Anglo-Irish, English as we speak it in Ireland. . . . Such an Irish poet can still express himself in the simplest terms of life and of the common furniture of life." *

Thomas MacDonagh is speaking here of the poetry that is being written to-day, of the poetry that comes out of a community that is still mainly agricultural, that is still close to the soil, that has but few possessions. And yet, with this naiveté there must go a great deal of subtility. "Like the Japanese," says Kuno Meyer, "the Celts were always quick to take an artistic hint; they avoid the obvious and the commonplace; the half-said thing to them is dearest." † This is said of the poetry written in Ireland many centuries ago, but the subtility that the critic credits the Celts with is still a racial heritage.

Irish poetry begins with a dedication—a dedication of the race to the land. The myth of the invasion tells that the first act of the invaders was the invoking of the land of Ireland—its hills, its rivers, its forests, its cataracts. Amergin, the

* Literature in Ireland.

† Ancient Irish Poetry.

first poet, pronounced the invocation from one of their ships, thereby dedicating the Milesian race to the mysterious land. That dedication is in many poems made since Amergin's time—the dedication of the poet to the land, of the race to the land.

When the Milesian Celts drew in their ships they found, peopling the island, not a folk to be destroyed or mingled with, but a remote and ever-living race, the Tuatha De Danaan, the Golden Race of Hesiod. Between the Milesians and the Tuatha De Danaan a truce was made with a partitioning of the country. To the Milesians went the upper surface and the accessible places, and to the De Danaans went the subterranean and the inaccessible places of the land. Thus, in Ireland, the Golden Race did not go down before the men of the Iron Race. They stayed to give glimpses of more lovely countries, more beautiful lovers, more passionate and adventurous lives to princes and peasants for more than a thousand years. And so an enchantment has stayed in this furthest of European lands—an enchantment that still lives through the Fairy Faith of the people, and that left in the old literature an allurements that, through the Lays of Marie de France, through the memorable incidents in the Tristan and Iseult story, through the quests which culminated outside of Ireland in the marvellous legend of the Grail, has passed into European literature.

Whether it has or has not to do with the prosaic issue of self-determination, it is certain that Irish poetry in these latter days is becoming more, and not less national. But it is no longer national in the deliberate way that Thomas Davis thought it should be national, as "condensed and gem-like history,"* or, as his example in ballad-making tended to make it national, by an insistence upon collective political feeling.

Strongbow's force, and Henry's wile,
Tudor's wrath and Stuart's guile,

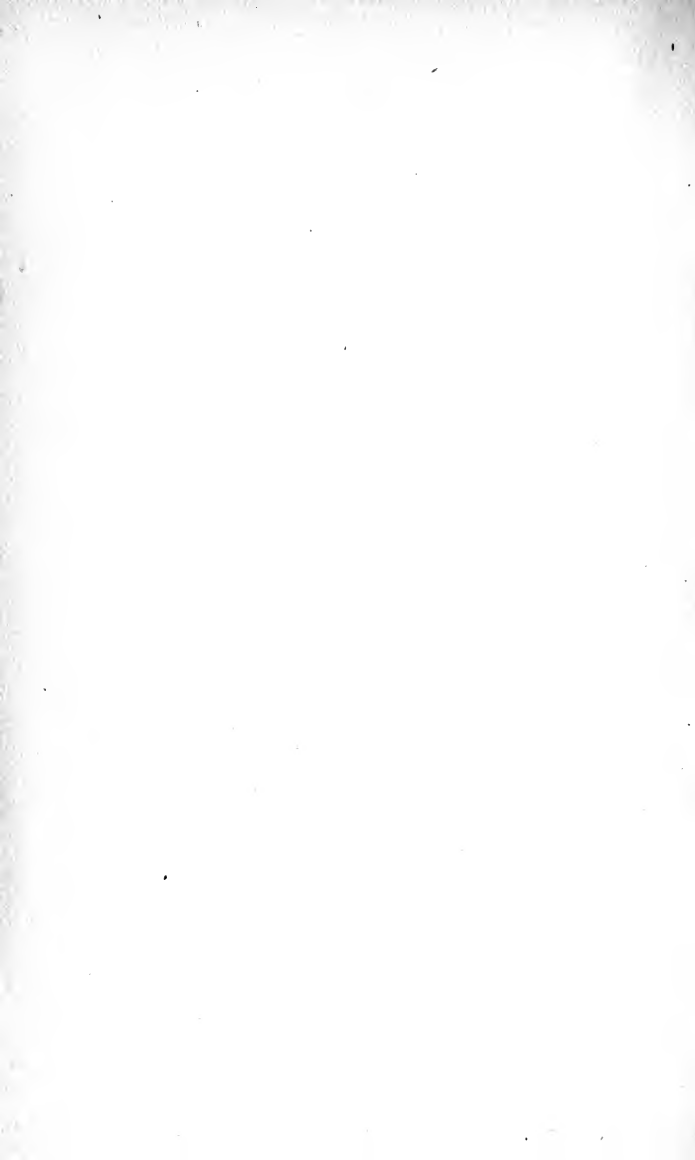
* "National poetry . . . binds us to the land by its condensed and gem-like history. It . . . fires us in action, prompts our invention, sheds a grace beyond the power of luxury round our homes, it is the recognized envoy of our minds among all mankind, and to all time."

And iron Strafford's tiger jaws,
And brutal Brunswick's penal laws;
Not forgetting Saxon faith,
Not forgetting Norman scath,
Not forgetting William's word,
Not forgetting Cromwell's sword.

No, Irish poetry is no longer national in the deliberate or the claimant way. But it is becoming national as the Irish landscape is national, as the tone and gesture of the Irish peasant is national. It is national in "A. E.'s" poetry—if not in those mystical reveries that transcend race and nationality, then in those impassioned statements in which he celebrates or rebukes the actions of some group or some individual; it is national in W. B. Yeats's poetry, in his range from invective to the poetry of abstract love; it is national in the landscape that Joseph Campbell evokes; in the bardic exuberance of language that James Stephens turns into poetry; in the delicate rhythms of Seumas O'Sullivan's lyrics and in their remoteness; in the hedgerows and the little fields that Francis Ledwidge's verse images; in the dedication that is in Joseph Plunkett's poetry, and in the high and happy adventurousness that is in the poetry of Thomas MacDonagh.

PART I

THE HOUSE, THE ROAD, THE FIELD,
THE FAIR, AND THE FIRESIDE



A Poem To Be Said on Hearing the Birds Sing

A FRAGRANT prayer upon the air
My child taught me,
Awaken there, the morn is fair,
The birds sing free;
Now dawns the day, awake and pray,
And bend the knee;
The Lamb who lay beneath the clay
Was slain for thee.

Translated by DR. DOUGLAS HYDE.

The Song of the Old Mother

I RISE in the dawn, and I kneel and blow
Till the seed of the fire flicker and glow;
And then I must scrub and bake and sweep
Till stars are beginning to blink and peep;
And the young lie long and dream in their bed
Of the matching of ribbons for bosom and head,
And their day goes over in idleness,
And they sigh if the wind but lift a tress:
While I must work because I am old,
And the seed of the fire gets feeble and cold.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS.

On Waking

SLEEP, gray brother of death,
Has touched me,
And passed on.

I arise, facing the east—
Pearl-doored sanctuary
From which the light,
Hand-linked with dew and fire,
Dances.

Hail, essence, hail!
Fill the windowys of my soul
With beauty:
Pierce and renew my bones:
Pour knowledge into my heart
As wine.

Cualann is bright before thee.
Its rocks melt and swim:
The secret they have kept
From the ancient nights of darkness
Flies like a bird.

What mourns?
Cualann's secret flying.
A lost voice
In endless fields.
What rejoices?
My voice lifted praising thee.

Praise! Praise! Praise!
Praise out of the trumpets, whose brass
Is the unyoked strength of bulls;

Praise upon the harp, whose strings
Are the light movement of birds;
Praise of leaf, praise of blossom,
Praise of the red-fibred clay;
Praise of grass,
Fire-woven veil of the temple;
Praise of the shapes of clouds;
Praise of the shadows of wells;
Praise of worms, of fetal things,
And of things in time's thought
Not yet begotten.
To thee, queller of sleep,
Looser of the snare of death.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL.

A Day in Ireland

FOUR sharp scythes sweeping—in concert keeping
The rich-robed meadow's broad bosom o'er,
Four strong men mowing, with bright health glowing
A long green swath spread each man before;
With sinews springing—my keen blade swinging,—
I strode—the fourth man in that blithe band;
As stalk of corn that summer morn,
The scythe felt light in my stalwart hand.

Oh, King of Glory! How changed my story,
Since in youth's noontide—long, long ago,
I mowed that meadow—no cloudy shadow
Between my brow and the hot sun's glow;
Fair girls raking the hay—and making
The fields resound with their laugh and glee,
Their voices ringing—than cuckoo's singing,
Made music sweeter by far to me.

Bees hovered over the honied clover,
Then nestward hied upon wings of light;
No use in trying to trace them flying—
One brief low hum and they're out of sight,
On downy thistle bright insects nestle,
Or flutter skyward on painted wings,
At times alighting on flowers inviting—
'Twas pleasant watching the airy things.

From hazel bushes came songs of thrushes
And blackbirds—sweeter than harper's lay;
While high in ether—with sun-tipped feather—
The skylark warbled his anthem gay;
With throats distended, sweet linnets blended
A thousand notes in one glorious chime,
Oh, King Eternal, 'twas life supernal
In beauteous Erin, that pleasant time.
Translated by MICHAEL CAVANAGH.

A Drover

TO MEATH of the pastures,
From wet hills by the sea,
Through Leitrim and Longford
Go my cattle and me.

I hear in the darkness
Their slipping and breathing.
I name them the bye-ways
They're to pass without heeding.

Then the wet, winding roads,
Brown bogs with black water;
And my thoughts on white ships
And the King o' Spain's daughter.

O! farmer, strong farmer!
You can spend at the fair
But your face you must turn
To your crops and your care.

And soldiers—red soldiers!
You've seen many lands;
But you walk two by two,
And by captain's commands.

O! the smell of the beasts,
The wet wind in the morn;
And the proud and hard earth
Never broken for corn;

And the crowds at the fair,
The herds loosened and blind,
Loud words and dark faces
And the wild blood behind.

(O! strong men with your best
I would strive breast to breast
I could quiet your herds
With my words, with my words.)

I will bring you, my kine,
Where there's grass to the knee;
But you'll think of scant croppings
Harsh with salt of the sea.

PADRAIC COLUM.

The Blind Man at the Fair

O TO be blind!
To know the darkness that I know.
The stir I hear is empty wind,
The people idly come and go.

The sun is black, tho' warm and kind,
The horsemen ride, the streamers blow
Vainly in the fluky wind,
For all is darkness where I go.

The cattle bellow to their kind,
The mummers dance, the jugglers throw,
The thimble-rigger speaks his mind—
But all is darkness where I go.

I feel the touch of womankind,
Their dresses flow as white as snow;
But beauty is a withered rind
For all is darkness where I go.

Last night the moon of Lammas shined,
Rising high and setting low;
But light is nothing to the blind—
All, all is darkness where they go.

White roads I walk with vacant mind,
White cloud-shapes round me drifting slow,
White lilies waving in the wind—
And darkness everywhere I go.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL.

Market Women's Cries

APPLES

COME buy my fine wares,
Plums, apples and pears.
A hundred a penny,
In conscience too many:
Come, will you have any?
My children are seven,
I wish them in Heaven;
My husband 's a sot,
With his pipe and his pot,
Not a farthen will gain them,
And I must maintain them.

ONIONS

Come, follow me by the smell,
Here are delicate onions to sell;
I promise to use you well.
They make the blood warmer,
You'll feed like a farmer;
For this is every cook's opinion,
No savoury dish without an onion;
But, lest your kissing should be spoiled,
Your onions must be thoroughly boiled:

Or else you may spare
Your mistress a share,
The secret will never be known:
She cannot discover
The breath of her lover,
But think it as sweet as her own.

HERRINGS

Be not sparing,
Leave off swearing.
Buy my herring
Fresh from Malahide,
Better never was tried.
Come, eat them with pure fresh butter and mustard,
Their bellies are soft, and as white as a custard.
Come, sixpence a dozen, to get me some bread,
Or, like my own herrings, I soon shall be dead.
JONATHAN SWIFT.

John-John

I DREAMT last night of you, John-John,
And thought you called to me;
And when I woke this morning, John,
Yourself I hoped to see;
But I was all alone, John-John,
Though still I heard your call;
I put my boots and bonnet on,
And took my Sunday shawl,
And went full sure to find you, John,
At Nenagh fair.

The fair was just the same as then,
Five years ago to-day,
When first you left the thimble-men
And came with me away;
For there again were thimble-men
And shooting galleries,
And card-trick men and maggie-men,
Of all sorts and degrees;
But not a sight of you, John-John,
Was anywhere.

I turned my face to home again,
And called myself a fool
To think you'd leave the thimble-men
And live again by rule,
To go to mass and keep the fast
And till the little patch;

My wish to have you home was past
Before I raised the latch
And pushed the door and saw you, John,
Sitting down there.

How cool you came in here, begad,
As if you owned the place!
But rest yourself there now, my lad,
'Tis good to see your face;
My dream is out, and now by it
I think I know my mind:
At six o'clock this house you'll quit,
And leave no grief behind;—
But until six o'clock, John-John,
My bit you'll share.

The neighbours' shame of me began
When first I brought you in;
To wed and keep a tinker man
They thought a kind of sin;
But now this three years since you've gone
'Tis pity me they do,
And that I'd rather have, John-John,
Than that they'd pity you,
Pity for me and you, John-John,
I could not bear.

Oh, you're my husband right enough,
But what's the good of that?
You know you never were the stuff
To be the cottage cat,
To watch the fire and hear me lock
The door and put out Shep—
But there, now, it is six o'clock
And time for you to step.
God bless and keep you far, John-John!
And that's my prayer.

THOMAS MACDONAGH.

No Miracle

THEY had a tale on which to gloat,
The gossips sitting in a row:
How Feylimeed took wife by throat
And broke her beauty with a blow.

And one, and then another, said:
Ah, fortunate if now she die;
For piteous is a cloth-bound head
Instead of beauty's flashing eye.

Else to some desert let her go
From women's words and eyes of men,
But ancient Eefa whispered low:
"Simply you read the story then."

No other word old Eefa spoke
But smiling blinked from side to side,
Till Enna, breathless, on them broke
Her mouth and eyes with horror wide.

"He gropes his way, his eyes are out!"
"Who gropes his way?" "Why, Faylimeed!"
"The blind cat's fingers, without doubt
Got at them sleeping?" "Nay, indeed,

"No fingers but his own plucked, flung
Them dazzling in the sullen tide,
For ah, they say his heart was wrung
To see the wreck of beauty's pride."

Then Eefa whispered from her place:
"As Faylimeed gripped wife by throat
Her eyes flashed love into his face
And his heart blazed while his hand smote."

DANIEL CORKERY.

Let Us Be Merry Before We Go

IF SADLY thinking, with spirits sinking,
Could, more than drinking, my cares compose
A cure for sorrow from sighs I'd borrow,
And hope to-morrow would end my woes.
But as in wailing there's nought availing,
And Death unfailing will strike the blow,
Then for that reason, and for a season,
Let us be merry before we go.

To joy a stranger, a wayworn ranger,
In every danger my course I've run;
Now hope all ending, and death befriending,
His last aid lending, my cares are done.
No more a rover, or hapless lover,
My griefs are over—my glass runs low;
Then for that reason, and for a season,
Let us be merry before we go.

JOHN PHILPOT CURRAN.

See Note Page 343.

Had I a Golden Pound

HAD I a golden pound to spend,
My love should mend and sew no more.
And I would buy her a little quern,
Easy to turn on the kitchen floor.

And for her windows curtains white,
With birds in flight and flowers in bloom,
To face with pride the road to town,
And mellow down her sunlit room.

And with the silver change we'd prove
The Truth of Love to life's own end,
With hearts the years could but embolden,
Had I a golden pound to spend.

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE.

The Coolun

AH, HAD you seen the Coolun,
Walking down by the cuckoo's street,
With the dew of the meadow shining
On her milk-white twinkling feet.
My love she is, and my colleen óg
And she dwells in Bal'nagar;
And she bears the palm of beauty bright
From the fairest that in Erin are.

In Bal'nagar is the Coolun:
Like the berry on the bough her cheek;
Bright beauty dwells forever
On her fair neck and ringlets sleek;
Oh, sweeter is her mouth's soft music
Than the lark or thrush at dawn,
Or the blackbird in the greenwood singing
Farewell to the setting sun.

Rise up, my boy! make ready
My horse, for I forth would ride,
To follow the modest damsel,
Where she walks on the green hill-side:
For ever since youth were we plighted,
In faith, troth, and wedlock true—
Oh, she's sweetèr to me nine times over
Than organ or cuckoo!

For ever since my childhood
I loved the fair and darling child;
But our people came between us,
And with lucre our pure love defiled:
Oh, my woe it is, and my bitter pain,
And I weep it night and day,
That the colleen bán of my early love
Is torn from my heart away.

Sweetheart and faithful treasure,
Be constant still, and true;
Nor for want of herds and houses
Leave one who would ne'er leave you.
I'll pledge you the blessed Bible,
Without and eke within,
That the faithful God will provide for us,
Without thanks to kith or kin.

Oh, love, do you remember
When we lay all night alone,
Beneath the ash in the winter storm,
When the oak wood round did groan?
No shelter then from the storm had we,
The bitter blast or sleet,
But your gown to wrap about our heads,
And my coat round our feet.

Translated by SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON.

See Note Page 344.

Have You Been at Carrick?

HAVE you been at Carrick, and saw my true-love there?
And saw you her features, all beautiful, bright, and fair?
Saw you the most fragrant, flowering, sweet apple-tree?—
Oh! saw you my loved one, and pines she in grief like me?

I have been at Carrick, and saw thy own true-love there;
And saw, too, her features, all beautiful, bright and fair;
And saw the most fragrant, flowering, sweet apple-tree—
I saw thy loved one—she pines not in grief, like thee!

Five guineas would price every tress of her golden hair—
Then think what a treasure her pillow at night to share,
These tresses thick-clustering and curling around her brow—
Oh, Ringlet of Fairness! I'll drink to thy beauty now! !

When seeking to slumber, my bosom is rent with sighs—
I toss on my pillow till morning's blest beams arise;
No aid, bright Beloved! can reach me save God above,
For a blood-lake is formed of the light of my eyes with love!

Until yellow Autumn shall usher the Paschal day,
And Patrick's gay festival come in its train away—
Although through my coffin the blossoming boughs shall grow,
My love on another I'll never in life bestow!

Lo! yonder the maiden illustrious, queen-like, high,
With long-flowing tresses adown to her sandal-tie—
Swan, fair as the lily, descended of high degree,
A myriad of welcomes, dear maid of my heart, to thee!

Translated by EDWARD WALSH.

The Stars Stand Up in the Air

THE stars stand up in the air,
The sun and the moon are gone,
The strand of its waters is bare.
And her sway is swept from the swan.

The cuckoo was calling all day,
Hid in the branches above,
How my stóirín is fled away,
'Tis my grief that I gave her my love.

Three things through love I see—
Sorrow and sin and death—
And my mind reminding me
That this doom I breathe with my breath.

But sweeter than violin or lute
Is my love—and she left me behind.
I wish that all music were mute,
And I to all beauty were blind.

She's more shapely than swan by the strand,
She's more radiant than grass after dew,
She's more fair than the stars where they stand—
'Tis my grief that her ever I knew!

Translated by THOMAS MACDONAGH.

Dear Dark Head

PUT your head, darling, darling, darling,
Your darling black head my heart above;
Oh, mouth of honey, with the thyme for fragrance,
Who with heart in breast could deny you love?

Oh, many and many a young girl for me is pining,
Letting her locks of gold to the cold wind free,
For me, the foremost of our gay young fellows;
But I'd leave a hundred, pure love, for thee!

Then put your head, darling, darling, darling,
Your darling black head my heart above;
Oh, mouth of honey, with the thyme for fragrance,
Who, with heart in breast, could deny you love?

Translated by SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON.

Pearl of the White Breast

THERE'S a colleen fair as May,
For a year and for a day,
I've sought by every way her heart to gain
There's no art of tongue or eye
Fond youths with maidens try,
But I've tried with ceaseless sigh, yet tried in vain.

If to France or far-off Spain
She'd cross the watery main,
To see her face again the sea I'd brave.
And if 'tis Heaven's decree
That mine she may not be,
May the Son of Mary me in mercy save!

O thou blooming milk-white dove,
To whom I've given true love,
Do not ever thus reprove my constancy.
There are maidens would be mine,
With wealth in hand and kine,
If my heart would but incline to turn from thee.

But a kiss with welcome bland,
And a touch of thy dear hand
Are all that I demand, wouldst thou not spurn;
For if not mine, dear girl,
O Snowy-Breasted Pearl!
May I never from the fair with life return!

Translated by GEORGE PETRIE.

Country Sayings

THE closing of an Autumn evening is like the running of a hound across the moor.

Night is a good herd: she brings all creatures home.

Lie down with the lamb

And rise with the bird,

From the time you see a harrow and a man behind it

Until you see stacks of turf and cocks of hay.

Cois na Teineadh

WHERE glows the Irish hearth with peat
There lives a subtle spell—
The faint blue smoke, the gentle heat,
The moorland odours tell.

Of white roads winding by the edge
Of bare, untamed land,
Where dry stone wall or ragged hedge
Runs wide on either hand.

To cottage lights that lure you in
From rainy Western skies;
And by the friendly glow within
Of simple talk, and wise,

And tales of magic, love or arms
From days when princes met
To listen to the lay that charms
The Connacht peasant yet,

{ There Honour shines through passions dire,
There beauty blends with mirth—
Wild hearts, ye never did aspire
Wholly for things of earth!

Cold, cold this thousand years—yet still
On many a time-stained page
Your pride, your truth, your dauntless will,
Burn on from age to 'age.

And still around the fires of peat
Live on the ancient days;
There still do living lips repeat
The old and deathless lays.

And when the wavering wreaths ascend
Blue in the evening air,
The soul of Ireland seems to bend
Above her children there.

T. W. ROLLESTON.

See Note Page 344.

** The Ballad of Father Gilligan*

THE old priest, Peter Gilligan,
Was weary night and day;
For half his flock were in their beds,
Or under green sods lay.

Once, while he nodded on a chair,
At the moth-hour of eve,
Another poor man sent for him,
And he began to grieve.

"I have no rest, nor joy, nor peace,
For people die and die";
And after cried he, "God forgive!
My body spake, not I!"

He knelt, and leaning on the chair
He prayed and fell asleep,
And the moth-hour went from the fields,
And stars began to peep.

They slowly into millions grew,
And leaves shook in the wind,
And God covered the world with shade,
And whispered to mankind.

Upon the time of sparrow chirp
When the moths come once more,
The old priest, Peter Gilligan,
Stood upright on the floor.

"Mavrone, mavrone! the man has died,
While I slept on the chair."
He roused his horse out of its sleep,
And rode with little care.

He rode now as he never rode,
By rocky lane and fen;
The sick man's wife opened the door:
"Father! you come again."

"And is the poor man dead?" he cried.
"He died an hour ago."
The old priest, Peter Gilligan,
In grief swayed to and fro.

"When you were gone, he turned and died
As merry as a bird."
The old priest, Peter Gilligan,
He knelt him at that word.

"He who hath made the night of stars
For souls who tire and bleed,
Sent one of His great angels down
To help me in my need.

"He who is wrapped in purple robes,
With planets in His care,
Had pity on the least of things
Asleep upon a chair."

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS.

Ballad of Douglas Bridge

ON Douglas Bridge I met a man
Who lived adjacent to Strabane,
Before the English hung him high
For riding with O'Hanlon.

The eyes of him were just as fresh
As when they burned within the flesh;
And his boot-legs were wide apart
From riding with O'Hanlon.

"God save you, Sir," I said with fear,
"You seem to be a stranger here."

"Not I," said he, "nor any man
Who rides with Count O'Hanlon.

"I know each glen from North Tyrone
To Monaghan, and I've been known
By every clan and parish, since
I rode with Count O'Hanlon."

"Before that time," said he to me,
"My fathers owned the land you see;
But they are now among the moors
A-riding with O'Hanlon."

"Before that time," said he with pride,
"My fathers rode where now they ride
As Rapparees, before the time
Of trouble and O'Hanlon."

"Good night to you, and God be with
The tellers of the tale and myth,
For they are of the spirit-stuff
That rides with Count O'Hanlon."

"Good night to you," said I, "and God
Be with the chargers, fairy-shod,
That bear the Ulster heroes forth
To ride with Count O'Hanlon."

On Douglas Bridge we parted, but
The Gap o' Dreams is never shut,
To one whose saddled soul to-night
Rides out with Count O'Hanlon.

FRANCIS CARLIN.

See Note Page 344.

The White Witch

HEAVEN help your home to-night,
MacCormac; for I know
A white witch woman is your bride:
You married for your woe.

You thought her but a simple maid
That roamed the mountain-side;
She put the witch's glance on you,
And so became your bride.

But I have watched her close and long
And know her all too well;
I never churned before her glance
But evil luck befell.

Last week the cow beneath my hand
Gave out no milk at all;
I turned, and saw the pale-haired girl
Lean laughing by the wall.

"A little sup," she cried, "for me;
The day is hot and dry."
"Begone!" I said, "you witch's child,"
She laughed a loud good-bye.

And when the butter in the churn
Will never rise, I see
Beside the door the white witch girl
Has got her eyes on me.

At dawn to-day I met her out
Upon the mountain-side,
And all her slender finger-tips
Were each a crimson dyed.

Now I had gone to seek a lamb
The darkness sent astray:
Sore for a lamb the dawning winds
And sharp-beaked birds of prey.

But when I saw the white witch maid
With blood upon her gown,
I said, "I'm poorer by a lamb;
The witch has dragged it down."

And "Why is this, your hands so red
All in the early day?"
I seized her by the shoulder fair,
She pulled herself away.

"It is the raddle on my hands,
The raddle all so red,
For I have marked MacCormac's sheep
And little lambs," she said.

"And what is this upon your mouth
And on your cheek so white?"
"Oh, it is but the berries' stain";
She trembled in her fright.

"I swear it is no berries' stain,
Nor raddle all so red;"
I laid my hands about her throat,
She shook me off, and fled.

I had not gone to follow her
A step upon the way,
When came I to my own lost lamb,
That dead and bloody lay.

"Come back," I cried, "you witch's child,
Come back and answer me:"
But no maid on the mountain-side
Could ever my eyes see.

I looked into the glowing east,
I looked into the south,
But did not see the slim young witch,
With crimson on her mouth.

Now, though I looked both well and long,
And saw no woman there,
Out from the bushes by my side
There crept a snow-white hare.

With knife in hand, I followed it
By ditch, by bog, by hill;
I said, "Your luck be in your feet,
For I shall do you ill.

I said, "Come, be you fox or hare,
Or be you mountain maid,
I'll cut the witch's heart from you,
For mischief you have made."

She laid her spells upon my path,
The brambles held and tore,
The pebbles slipped beneath my feet,
The briars wounded sore.

And then she vanished from my eyes
Beside MacCormac's farm,
I ran to catch her in the house
And keep the man from harm.

She stood with him beside the fire,
And when she saw my knife,
She flung herself upon his breast
And prayed he'd save her life.

"The woman is a witch," I cried,
"So cast her off from you;"
"She'll be my wife to-day," he said,
"Be careful what you do!"

"The woman is a witch," I said;
He laughed both loud and long:
She laid her arms about his neck,
Her laugh was like a song.

"The woman is a witch," he mocked,
And laughed both long and loud;
She bent her head upon his breast,
Her hair was like a cloud.

I said, "See blood upon her mouth
And on each finger tip!"
He said, "I see a pretty maid,
A rose upon her lip."

He took her slender hand in his
To kiss the stain away—
Oh, well she cast her spell on him,
What could I do but pray?

"May heaven guard your house to-night!"
I whisper as I go,
"For you have won a witch for bride,
And married for your woe."

DORA SIGERSON SHORTER.

The Spinning Wheel

MELLOW the moonlight to shine is beginning,
Close by the window young Eileen is spinning;
Bent over the fire her blind grandmother, sitting,
Is crooning, and moaning, and drowsily knitting:—
"Eileen, achora, I hear someone tapping."
"'Tis the ivy, dear mother, against the glass flapping."
"Eily, I surely hear somebody sighing."
"'Tis the sound, mother dear, of the summer wind dying."
Merrily, cheerily, noiselessly whirring,
Swings the wheel, spins the wheel, while the foot's stirring;
Sprightly, and brightly, and airily ringing
Thrills the sweet voice of the young maiden singing.

"What's that noise that I hear at the window, I wonder?"
"'Tis the little birds chirping the holly-bush under."
"What makes you be shoving and moving your stool on,
And singing, all wrong, that old song of 'The Coolun'?"
There's a form at the casement—the form of her true love—
And he whispers, with face bent, "I'm waiting for you, love;
Get up on the stool, through the lattice step lightly,
We'll rove in the grove, while the moon's shining brightly."
Merrily, cheerily, noiselessly whirring,
Swings the wheel, spins the wheel, while the foot's stirring;
Sprightly, and brightly, and airily ringing
Thrills the sweet voice of the young maiden singing.

The maid shakes her head, on her lips lays her fingers,
Steals up from her seat—longs to go, and yet lingers;
A frightened glance turns to her drowsy grandmother,
Puts one foot on the stool, spins the wheel with the other,
Lazily, easily, swings now the wheel round,
Slowly and lowly is heard not the reel's sound;
Noiseless and light to the lattice above her
The maid steps—then leaps to the arms of her lover.
Slower—and slower—and slower the wheel swings;
Lower—and lower—and lower the reel rings;
Ere the reel and the wheel stopped their ringing and moving,
Through the grove the young lovers by moonlight are roving.

JOHN FRANCIS WALLER.

Ringleted Youth of My Love

RINGLETED youth of my love,
With thy locks bound loosely behind thee,
You passed by the road above,
But you never came in to find me;
Where were the harm for you
If you came for a little to see me,
Your kiss is a wakening dew
Were I ever so ill or so dreamy.

If I had golden store
I would make a nice little boreen,
To lead straight up to his door,
The door of the house of my stóreen;
Hoping to God not to miss
The sound of his footfall in it,
I have waited so long for his kiss
That for days I have not slept a minute.

I thought, oh my love! you were so—
As the moon is, or the sun on a fountain,
And I thought after that you were snow,
The cold snow on the top of the mountain;
And I thought after that you were more
Like God's lamp shining to find me,
Or the bright star of knowledge before,
And the star of knowledge behind me.

You promised me high-heeled shoes,
And satin and silk, my stóreen,
And to follow me, never to lose,
Though the ocean were round us roaring;
Like a bush in a gap in a wall
I am now left lonely without thee,
And this house I grow dead of, is all
That I see around or about me.

Translated by DOUGLAS HYDE.

Do You Remember That Night?

DO YOU remember that night
That you were at the window,
With neither hat nor gloves,
Nor coat to shelter you;
I reached out my hand to you,
And you ardently grasped it,
And I remained in converse with you
Until the lark began to sing?

Do you remember that night
That you and I were
At the foot of the rowan tree,
And the night drifting snow;
Your head on my breast,
And your pipe sweetly playing?
I little thought that night
Our ties of love would ever loosen.

O beloved of my inmost heart,
Come some night, and soon,
When my people are at rest,
That we may talk together;
My arms shall encircle you,
While I relate my sad tale
That it is your pleasant, soft converse
That has deprived me of heaven.

The fire is unraked,
The light extinguished,
The key under the door,
And do you softly draw it.
My mother is asleep,
And I am quite awake;
My fortune is in my hand,
And I am ready to go with you.
Translated by EUGENE O'CURRY.

The Song of the Ghost

WHEN all were dreaming but Pastheen Power,
A light came streaming beneath her bower,
A heavy foot at her door delayed,
A heavy hand on the latch was laid.

"Now who dare venture at this dark hour,
Unbid to enter my maiden bower?"

"Dear Pastheen, open the door to me,
And your true lover you'll surely see."

"My own true lover, so tall and brave,
Lives exiled over the angry wave."

"Your true love's body lies on the bier,
His faithful spirit is with you here."

"His look was cheerful, his voice was gay:
Your speech is fearful, your voice is gray;
And sad and sunken your eye of blue,
But Patrick, Patrick, alas 'tis you."

Ere dawn was breaking she heard below
The two cocks shaking their wings to crow.
"O hush you, hush you, both red and gray,
Or you will hurry my love away."

"O hush your crowing both gray and red
Or he'll be going to join the dead;
O cease from calling his ghost to the mould,
And I'll come crowning your combs with gold."

When all were dreaming but Pastheen Power,
A light went streaming from out her bower,
And on the morrow when they awoke,
They knew that sorrow her heart had broke.

ALFRED PERCIVAL GRAVES.

Lullaby

SOFTLY now the burn is rushing,
Every lark its song is hushing,
On the moor thick rest is falling,
Just one heather-blade is calling—
Calling, calling, lonely, lonely,
For my darling, for my only,
Leanbhain O, Leanbhain O!

Trotting home, my dearie, dearie,
Wee black lamb comes, wearie, wearie,
Here its soft feet pit-a-patting
Quickly o'er the flowery matting,
See its brown-black eyes a-blinking—
Of its bed it's surely thinking,
Leanbhain O, Leanbhain O!

The hens to roost wee Nora's shooing,
Brindley in the byre is mooing,
The tired-out cricket's quit its calling,
Velvet sleep on all is falling,—
Lark and cow, and sheep and starling,—
Feel it kiss our white-haired darling,
Leanbhain O, Leanbhain O!
SEUMAS MACMANUS.

I Lie Down With God

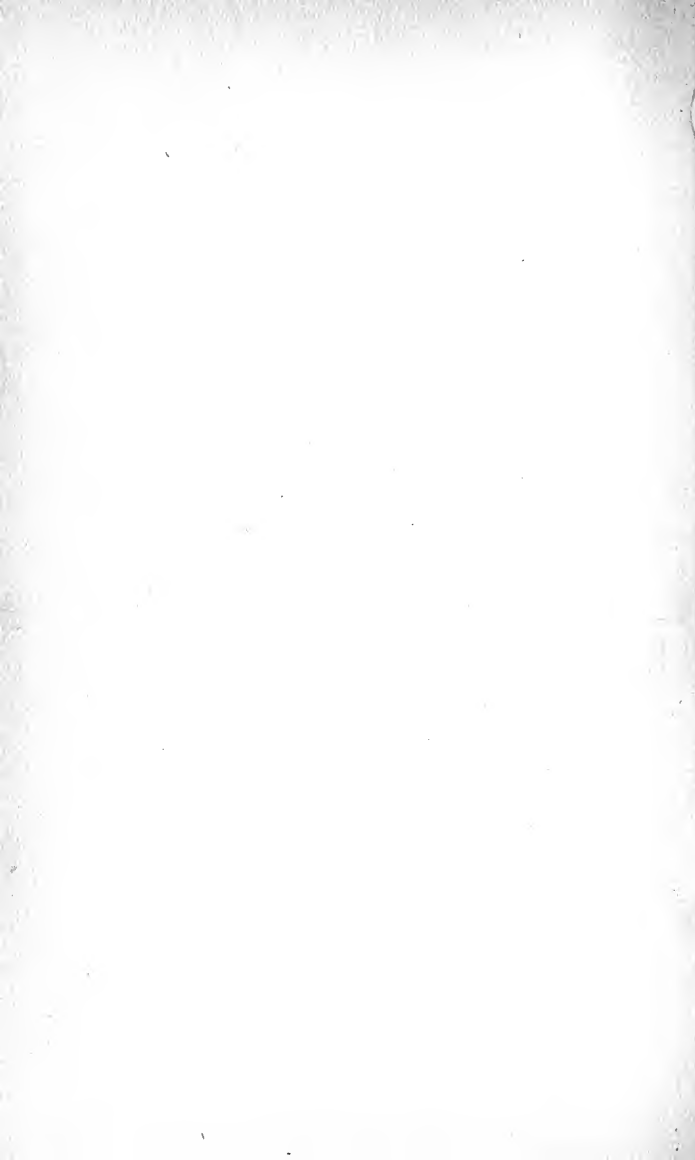
I LIE down with God, and may God lie down with me;
The right hand of God under my head,
The two hands of Mary round about me,
The cross of the nine white angels,
From the back of my head
To the sole of my feet.
May I not lie with evil,
And may evil not lie with me.
Anna, mother of Mary,
Mary, mother of Christ,
Elizabeth, mother of John Baptist,
I myself beseech these three
To keep the couch free from sickness.
The tree on which Christ suffered
Be between me and the heavy-lying ——*,
And any other thing that seeks my harm.
With the will of God and the aid of the glorious Virgin.

Translated by ELEANOR HULL.

* The nightmare.

PART II

**STREET SONGS AND COUNTRYSIDE
SONGS—MAINLY ANONYMOUS**



Johnny, I Hardly Knew Ye

WHILE going the road to sweet Athy,
Hurroo! hurroo!

While going the road to sweet Athy,
Hurroo! hurroo!

While going the road to sweet Athy,
A stick in my hand and a drop in my eye,
A doleful damsel I heard cry:

"Och, Johnny, I hardly knew ye!

"With drums and guns, and guns and drums,
The enemy nearly slew ye;

My darling dear, you look so queer,
Och, Johnny, I hardly knew ye!

"Where are your eyes that looked so mild?
Hurroo! hurroo!

Where are your eyes that looked so mild?
Hurroo! hurroo!

Where are your eyes that looked so mild,
When my poor heart you first beguiled?
Why did you run from me and the child?

Och, Johnny, I hardly knew ye!

With drums, etc.

"Where are the legs with which you run?
Hurroo! hurroo!

Where are thy legs with which you run?
Hurroo! hurroo!

Where are the legs with which you run
When first you went to carry a gun?
Indeed, your dancing days are done!
Och, Johnny, I hardly knew ye!
With drums, etc.

It grieved my heart to see you sail,
Hurroo! hurroo!
It grieved my heart to see you sail,
Hurroo! hurroo!
It grieved my heart to see you sail,
Though from my heart you took leg-bail;
Like a cod you're doubled up head and tail,
Och, Johnny, I hardly knew ye!
With drums, etc.

"You haven't an arm and you haven't a leg,
Hurroo! hurroo!
You haven't an arm and you haven't a leg,
Hurroo! hurroo!
You haven't an arm and you haven't a leg,
You're an eyeless, noseless, chickenless egg;
You'll have to be put with a bowl to beg:
Och, Johnny, I hardly knew ye!
With drums, etc.

"I'm happy for to see you home,
Hurroo! hurroo!
I'm happy for to see you home,
Hurroo! hurroo!
I'm happy for to see you home,
All from the Island of Sulloon;
So low in flesh, so high in bone;
Och, Johnny, I hardly knew ye!
With drums, etc.

"But sad it is to see you so,
Hurroo! hurroo!
But sad it is to see you so,
Hurroo! hurroo!

But sad it is to see you so,
And to think of you now as an object of woe,
Your Peggy'll still keep you on as her beau;
Och, Johnny, I hardly knew ye!

With drums and guns, and guns and drums,
The enemy nearly slew ye;
My darling dear, you look so queer,
Och, Johnny, I hardly knew ye.

Nell Flaherty's Drake

MY NAME it is Nell, right candid I tell,
And I live near a dell I ne'er will deny,
I had a large drake, the truth for to spake,
My grandfather left me when going to die;
He was merry and sound, and would weigh twenty pound,
The universe round would I rove for his sake.
Bad luck to the robber, be he drunken or sober,
That murdered Nell Flaherty's beautiful drake.

His neck it was green, and rare to be seen,
He was fit for a queen of the highest degree.
His body so white, it would you delight,
He was fat, plump, and heavy, and brisk as a bee.
This dear little fellow, his legs they were yellow,
He could fly like a swallow, or swim like a hake,
But some wicked habbage, to grease his white cabbage,
Has murdered Nell Flaherty's beautiful drake!

May his pig never grunt, may his cat never hunt,
That a ghost may him haunt in the dark of the night.
May his hens never lay, may his horse never neigh,
May his goat fly away like an old paper kite;
May his duck never quack, may his goose be turned black
And pull down his stack with her long yellow beak.
May the scurvy and itch never part from the britch
Of the wretch that murdered Nell Flaherty's drake!

May his rooster ne'er crow, may his bellows not blow,
Nor potatoes to grow—may he never have none—
May his cradle not rock, may his chest have no lock,
May his wife have no frock for to shade her backbone.
That the bugs and the fleas may this wicked wretch tease,
And a piercing north breeze make him tremble and shake.
May a four-years'-old bug build a nest in the lug
Of the monster that murdered Nell Flaherty's drake.

May his pipe never smoke, may his tea-pot be broke,
And to add to the joke may his kettle not boil;
May he be poorly fed till the hour he is dead.
May he always be fed on lobsouse and fish oil.
May he swell with the gout till his grinders fall out,
May he roar, howl, and shout with a horrid toothache,
May his temple wear horns and his toes carry corns,
The wretch that murdered Nell Flaherty's drake.

May his dog yelp and howl with both hunger and cold,
May his wife always scold till his brains go astray.
May the curse of each hag, that ever carried a bag,
Light down on the wag till his head it turns gray.
May monkeys still bite him, and mad dogs affright him,
And every one slight him, asleep or awake.
May wasps ever gnaw him, and jackdaws ever claw him,
The monster that murdered Nell Flaherty's drake.

But the only good news I have to diffuse,
Is of Peter Hughes and Paddy McCade,
And crooked Ned Manson, and big-nosed Bob Hanson,
Each one had a grandson of my beautiful drake.
Oh! my bird he has dozens of nephews and cousins,
And one I must have, or my heart it will break.
To keep my mind easy, or else I'll run crazy,
And so ends the song of my beautiful drake.

Allalu Mo Wauleen

(The Beggar's Address to His Bag)

GOOD neighbors, dear, be cautious,
And covet no man's pounds or pence.
Ambition's greedy maw shun,
And tread the path of innocence!
Dread crooked ways and cheating,
And be not like those hounds of Hell,
Like prowling wolves awaiting,
Which once upon my footsteps fell.

An allalu mo wauleen,
My little bag I treasured it;
'Twas stuffed from string to sauleen,
A thousand times I measured it!

Should you ever reach Dungarvan,
That wretched hole of dole and sin,
Be on your sharpest guard, man,
Or the eyes out of your head they'll pin.
Since I left sweet Tipperary,
They eased me of my cherished load,
And left me light and airy,
A poor dark man upon the road!

An allalu mo wauleen!
No hole, no stitch, no rent in it,
'Twas stuffed from string to sauleen,
My half-year's rent was pent in it.

A gay gold ring unbroken,
A token to a fair young maid,
Which told of love unspoken,
To one whose hopes were long delayed,
A pair of woolen hoseen,
Close knitted, without rub or seam,
And a pound of weed well-chosen,
Such as smokers taste in dream!

An allalu mo wauleen,
Such a store I had in it;
'Twas stuffed from string to sauleen,
And nothing mean or bad in it!

Full oft in cosy corner
We'd sit beside a winter fire,
Nor envied prince or lord, or
To kingly rank did we aspire.
But twice they overhauled us,
The dark police of aspect dire,
Because they feared, Mo Chairdeas,
You held the dreaded Fenian fire!

An allalu mo wauleen,
My bag and me they sundered us,
'Twas stuffed from string to sauleen,
My bag of bags they sundered us!

Yourself and I, mo stóreen,
At every hour of night and day,
Through road and lane and bohreen
Without complaint we made our way,
Till one sore day a carman
In pity took us from the road,
And faced us towards Dungarvan
Where mortal sin hath firm abode.

An allalu mo wauleen,
Without a hole or rent in it,
'Twas stuffed from string to sauleen,
My half-year's rent was pent in it!

My curses attend Dungarvan,
Her boats, her borough, and her fish,
May every woe that mars man
Come dancing down upon her dish!
For all the rogues behind you,
From Slaney's bank to Shannon's tide,
Are but poor scholars, mind you,
To the rogues you'd meet in Abbeyside!

An allalu mo wauleen,
My little bag I treasured it,
'Twas stuffed from string to sauleen,
A thousand times I measured it!

See Note Page 345.

The Maid of the Sweet Brown Knowe

COME all ye lads and lassies and listen to me a while,
And I'll sing for you a verse or two will cause you all
to smile;

It's all about a young man, and I'm going to tell you now,
How he lately came a-courting of the Maid of the Sweet
Brown Knowe.

Said he, "My pretty fair maid, will you come along with me,
We'll both go off together, and married we will be;

We'll join our hands in wedlock bands, I'm speaking to you
now,

And I'll do my best endeavour for the Maid of the Sweet
Brown Knowe."

This fair and fickle young thing, she knew not what to say,
Her eyes did shine like silver bright and merrily did play;

She said, "Young man, your love subdue, for I am not ready
now,

And I'll spend another season at the foot of the Sweet
Brown Knowe.

Said he, "My pretty fair maid, how can you say so,
Look down in yonder valley where my crops do gently grow,
Look down in yonder valley where my horses and my plough
Are at their daily labour for the Maid of the Sweet Brown
Knowe."

"If they're at their daily labour, kind sir, it's not for me,
For I've heard of your behaviour, I have, indeed," she said;
"There is an Inn where you call in, I have heard the people
say,

Where you rap and call and pay for all, and go home at the
break of day."

"If I rap and call and pay for all, the money is all my own,
And I'll never spend your fortune, for I hear you have got
none.

You thought you had my poor heart broke in talking with
me now,

But I'll leave you where I found you, at the foot of the Sweet
Brown Knowe."

I Know My Love

I KNOW my Love by his way of walking,
And I know my love by his way of talking,
And I know my love dressed in a suit of blue,
And if my Love leaves me, what will I do?
And still she cried, "I love him the best,
And a troubled mind, sure, can know no rest,"
And still she cried, "Bonny boys are few,
And if my Love leaves me, what will I do?"

There is a dance house in Mar'dyke,
And there my true love goes every night;
He takes a strange one upon his knee,
And don't you think, now, that vexes me?
And still she cried, "I love him the best,
And a troubled mind, sure, can know no rest,"
And still she cried, "Bonny boys are few,
And if my Love leaves me, what will I do?"

If my Love knew I could wash and wring,
If my Love knew I could weave and spin,
I would make a dress all of the finest kind,
But the want of money, sure, leaves me behind.

And still she cried, "I love him the best,
And a troubled mind, sure, can know no rest,"
And still she cried, "Bonny boys are few,
And if my Love leaves me, what will I do?"

I know my Love is an arrant rover,
I know he'll wander the wide world over,

In dear old Ireland he'll no longer tarry,
And an English one he is sure to marry.

And still she cried, "I love him the best,
And a troubled mind, sure, can know no rest,"
And still she cried, "Bonny boys are few,
And if my Love leaves me, what will I do?"

The Lambs on the Green Hills Stood Gazing on Me

THE lambs on the green hills stood gazing on me,
And many strawberries grew round the salt sea,
And many strawberries grew round the salt sea,
And many a ship sailed the ocean.

And bride and bride's party to church they did go,
The bride she rode foremost, she bears the best show,
But I followed after with my heart full of woe,
To see my love wed to another.

The first place I saw her 'twas in the church stand,
Gold rings on her finger and love by the hand,
Says I, "My wee lassie, I will be the man
Although you are wed to another."

The next place I saw her was on the way home,
I ran on before her, not knowing where to roam,
Says I, "My wee lassie, I'll be by your side
Although you are wed to another."

The next place I saw her 'twas laid in bride's bed,
I jumped in beside her and did kiss the bride;
"Stop, stop," said the groomsman, "till I speak a word,
Will you venture your life on the point of my sword?
For courting so slowly you've lost this fair maid,
So begone, for you'll never enjoy her."

Oh, make my grave then both large, wide and deep,
And sprinkle it over with flowers so sweet,
And lay me down in it to take my last sleep,
For that's the best way to forget her.

My Love Is Like the Sun

THE winter is past,
And the summer's come at last
And the blackbirds sing in every tree;
The hearts of these are glad
But my poor heart is sad,
Since my true love is absent from me.

The rose upon the briar
By the water running clear
Gives joy to the linnet and the bee;
Their little hearts are blest
But mine is not at rest,
While my true love is absent from me.

A livery I'll wear
And I'll comb out my hair,
And in velvet so green I'll appear,
And straight I will repair
To the Curragh of Kildare
For it's there I'll find tidings of my dear.

I'll wear a cap of black
With a frill around my neck,
Gold rings on my fingers I'll wear:
All this I'll undertake
For my true lover's sake,
He resides at the Curragh of Kildare.

I would not think it strange
Thus the world for to range,
If I only get tidings of my dear;
But here in Cupid's chain
If I'm bound to remain,
I would spend my whole life in despair.

My love is like the sun
That in the firmament does run,
And always proves constant and true;
But he is like the moon
That wanders up and down,
And every month is new.

All ye that are in love
And cannot it remove,
I pity the pains you endure;
For experience lets me know
That your hearts are full of woe,
And a woe that no mortal can cure.

See Note Page 345.

The Nobleman's Wedding

ONCE I was at a nobleman's wedding—
'Twas of a girl that proved unkind,
But now she begins to think of her losses
Her former true lover still runs in her mind.

"Here is the token of gold that was broken,
Seven long years, love, I have kept it for your sake
You gave to me as a true lover's token,
No longer with me, love, it shall remain."

The bride she sat at the head of the table,
The words he said she marked them right well;
To sit any longer she was not able,
And down at the bridegroom's feet she fell.

"One request I do make of you
And I hope you will grant it to me,
To lie this night in the arms of my mother,
And ever after to lie with thee."

No sooner asked than it was granted,
With tears in her eyes she went to bed,
And early, early, the very next morning
He rose and found that this young bride was dead.

He took her up in his arms so softly,
And carried her to the meadow so green,
And covered her over with green leaves and laurels,
Thinking she might come to life again.

Johnny's the Lad I Love

AS I roved out on a May morning,
Being in the youthful spring,
I leaned my back close to the garden wall,
To hear the small birds sing.

And to hear two lovers talk, my dear,
To know what they would say,
That I might know a little of her mind
Before I would go away.

"Come sit you down, my heart," he says,
"All on this pleasant green,
It's full three-quarters of a year and more
Since together you and I have been."

"I will not sit on the grass," she said,
"Now nor any other time,
For I hear you're engaged with another maid,
And your heart is no more of mine.

"Oh, I'll not believe what an old man says,
For his days are well nigh done.
Nor will I believe what a young man says,
For he's fair to many a one.

"But I will climb a high, high tree,
And rob a wild bird's nest,
And I'll bring back whatever I do find
To the arms I love the best," she said,
"To the arms I love the best."

I Know Where I'm Going

I KNOW where I'm going,
I know who's going with me,
I know who I love,
But the dear knows who I'll marry.

I'll have stockings of silk,
Shoes of fine green leather,
Combs to buckle my hair
And a ring for every finger.

Feather beds are soft,
Painted rooms are bonny;
But I'd leave them all
To go with my love Johnny.

Some say he's dark,
I say he's bonny,
He's the flower of them all
My handsome, coaxing Johnny.

I know where I'm going,
I know who's going with me,
I know who I love,
But the dear knows who I'll marry.

The Streams of Bunclody

O H, WERE I at the moss-house where the birds do increase,
At the foot of Mount Leinster or some silent place
Near the streams of Bunclody where all pleasures do meet,
And all I'd require is one kiss from you, sweet.

If I was in Bunclody I would think myself at home,
'Tis there I would have a sweetheart, but here I have none.
Drinking strong liquor in the height of my cheer—
Here's a health to Bunclody and the lass I love dear.

The cuckoo is a pretty bird, it sings as it flies,
It brings us good tidings and tells us no lies,
It sucks the young bird's eggs to make its voice clear,
And it never cries cuckoo till the summer is near.

If I was a clerk and could write a good hand,
I would write to my true love that she might understand,
I am a young fellow that is wounded in love,
That lived by Bunclody, but now must remove.

If I was a lark and had wings, I then could fly,
I would go to yon arbour where my love she doth lie,
I'd proceed to yon arbour where my love she does lie,
And on her fond bosom contented I would die.

The reason my love slights me, as you may understand,
Because she has a freehold, and I have no land,
She has a great store of riches and a large sum of gold,
And everything fitting a house to uphold.

So, adieu, my dear father, adieu, my dear mother,
Farewell to my sister, farewell to my brother;
I'm going to America, my fortune for to try;
When I think upon Bunclody, I'm ready for to die!

Lovely Mary Donnelly

OH, LOVELY Mary Donnelly, my joy, my only best
If fifty girls were round you, I'd hardly see the rest;
Be what it may the time o' day, the place be where it will
Sweet looks o' Mary Donnelly, they bloom before me still.

Her eyes like mountain water that's flowing on a rock,
How clear they are, how dark they are! they give me many a
shock.

Red rowans warm in sunshine and wetted with a shower,
Could ne'er express the charming lip that has me in its
power.

Her nose is straight and handsome, her eyebrows lifted up,
Her chin is very neat and pert, and smooth like a china cup,
Her hair's the brag of Ireland, so weighty and so fine;
It's rolling down upon her neck, and gathered in a twine.

The dance o' last Whit-Monday night exceeded all before,
No pretty girl from miles about was missing from the floor;
But Mary kept the belt of love, and O but she was gay!
She danced a jig, she sung a song, that took my heart away.

When she stood up for dancing, her steps were so complete,
The music nearly killed itself to listen to her feet;
The fiddler mourned his blindness, he heard her so much
praised,
But blessed his luck not to be deaf when once her voice she
raised.

And evermore I'm whistling or lilting what you sung,
Your smile is always in my heart, your name beside my
tongue;
But you've as many sweethearts as you'd count on both your
hands,
And for myself there's not a thumb or little finger stands.

Oh, you're the flower o' womankind in country or in town;
The higher I exalt you, the lower I'm cast down.
If some great lord should come this way, and see your beauty
bright.
And you to be his lady, I'd own it was but right.

Oh, might we live together in a lofty palace hall,
Where joyful music rises, and where scarlet curtains fall!
Oh, might we live together in a cottage mean and small,
With sods or grass the only roof, and mud the only wall!

O lovely Mary Donnelly, your beauty's my distress,
It's far too beauteous to be mine, but I'll never wish it less.
The proudest place would fit your face, and I am poor and
low

But blessings be about you, dear, wherever you may go.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

Draherin O Machree

I GRIEVE when I think on the dear happy days of my youth,
When all the bright dreams of this faithless world seem'd truth;
When I stray'd thro' the green wood, as gay as a mid-summer bee,
In brotherly love with my Draherin O Machree!

Together we lay in the sweet-scented meadows to rest,
Together we watch'd the gay lark as he sung o'er his nest,
Together we plucked the red fruit of the fragrant hawthorn tree,
And I loved as a sweetheart, my Draherin O Machree!

His form was straight as a hazel that grows in the glen,
His manners were courteous, and social, and gay amongst men;
His bosom was white as the lily on summer's green lea—
He's God's brightest image was Draherin O Machree!

Oh! sweet were his words as the honey that falls in the night,
And his young smiling face like the May-bloom was fresh,
and as bright;
His eyes were like dew on the flower of the sweet apple tree;
My heart's spring and summer was Draherin O Machree!

He went to the wars when proud England united with France;
His regiment was first in the red battle-charge to advance;
But when night drew its veil o'er the gory and life-wasting
 fray,
Pale, bleeding, and cold lay my Draherin O Machree!

Now I'm left to weep, like the sorrowful bird of the night;
This earth and its pleasures no more shall afford me delight.
The dark, narrow grave is the only sad refuge for me,
Since I lost my heart's darling—my Draherin O Machree!
See Note Page 345.

*A Complete Account of the Various Colonizations
of Ireland as Delivered by the Sage Fintan*

SHOULD any enquire about Eirinn,
It is I who can tell him the truth,
Concerning the deeds of each daring
Invader, since Time was a youth.

First Cassir, Bith's venturesome daughter,
Came here o'er the Eastern Sea;
And fifty fair damsels she brought her—
To solace her warriors three.

Bith died at the foot of his mountain,
And Ladra on top of his height;
And Cassir by Boyle's limpid fountain,
Ere rushed down the Flood in its might.

For a year, while the waters encumber
The Earth, at Tul-Tunna of strength,
I slept, none enjoyed such sweet slumber
As that which I woke from at length.

When Partholan came to the island,
From Greece, in the Eastern land,
I welcomed him gaily to my land,
And feasted the whole of his band.

Again, when Death seized on the strangers,
I roamed the land, merry and free,
Both careless and fearless of dangers,
Till blithe Nemid came o'er the sea.

The Firbolgs and roving Fir-Gallians,
Came next like the waves in their flow;
The Fir-Dennans arrived in battalions,
And landed in Erris—Mayo.

Then came the wise Tuatha-de-Danann,
Concealed in black clouds from their foe;
I feasted with them near the Shannon,
Though that was a long time ago.

After them came the Children of Milé,
From Spain, o'er the Southern waves:
I lived with the tribes as their Filea
And chanted the deeds of their braves.

Time ne'er my existence could wither,
From Death's grasp I always was freed:
Till Patrick, the Christian, came hither
To spread the Redeemer's pure creed.

My name it is Fintan, the Fair-man,
Of Bochra, the son, you must know it;
I lived through the Flood in my lair, man,
I am now an illustrious poet.

The Boyne Water

JULY the first, of a morning clear, one thousand six hundred and ninety,
King William did his men prepare—of thousands he had thirty—
To fight King James and all his foes, encamped near the Boyne Water;
He little feared, though two to one, their multitude to scatter.

King William called his officers, saying: "Gentlemen, mind your station,
And let your valour here be shown before this Irish nation;
My brazen walls let no man break, and your subtle foes you'll scatter,
Be sure you show them good English play as you go over the water."

Both foot and horse they marched on, intending them to batter,
But the brave Duke Schomberg he was shot as he crossed over the water.
When that King William did observe the brave Duke Schomberg falling,
He reined his horse with a heavy heart, on the Enniskillenes calling:

"What will you do for me, brave boys—see yonder men retreating?

Our enemies encouraged are, and English drums are beating." He says, "My boys feel no dismay at the losing of one commander,

For God shall be our King this day, and I'll be general under."

Within four yards of our fore-front, before a shot was fired, A sudden snuff they got that day, which little they desired; For horse and man fell to the ground, and some hung on their saddle:

Others turned up their forked ends, which we call coup de ladle.

Prince Eugene's regiment was the next, on our right hand advanced

Into a field of standing wheat, where Irish horses pranced; But the brandy ran so in their heads, their senses all did scatter,

They little thought to leave their bones that day at the Boyne Water.

Both men and horse lay on the ground, and many there lay bleeding,

I saw no sickles there that day—but, sure, there was sharp shearing.

Now, praise God, all true Protestants, and heaven's and earth's Creator,

For the deliverance he sent our enemies to scatter.

The Church's foes will pine away, like churlish-hearted Nabal, For our deliverer came this day like the great Zorobabal.

So praise God, all true Protestants, and I will say no further,
But had the Papists gained that day, there would have been
open murder.

Although King James and many more were ne'er that way
inclined,

It was not in their power to stop what the rabble they de-
signed.

See Note Page 345.

The Shan Van Vocht

OH! the French are on the say,
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
The French are on the say,
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
Oh! the French are in the Bay,
They'll be here without delay,
And the Orange will decay,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
Oh! the French are in the Bay,
They'll be here by break of day
And the Orange will decay,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.

And where will they have their camp?
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
Where will they have their camp?
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
On the Curragh of Kildare,
The boys they will be there,
With their pikes in good repair,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
To the Curragh of Kildare
The boys they will repair
And Lord Edward will be there,
Says the Shan Van Vocht.

Then what will the yeomen do?
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
What should the yeomen do,
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
What should the yeomen do,
But throw off the red and blue,
And swear that they'll be true
To the Shan Van Vocht?
What should the yeomen do,
But throw off the red and blue,
And swear that they'll be true
To the Shan Van Vocht?

And what colour will they wear?
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
What colour will they wear?
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
What colours should be seen
Where their father's homes have been
But their own immortal green?
Says the Shan Van Vocht.

And will Ireland then be free?
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
Will Ireland then be free?
Says the Shan Van Vocht;
Yes! Ireland shall be free,
From the centre to the sea;
Then hurrah for Liberty!
Says the Shan Van Vocht.
Yes! Ireland shall be free,
From the centre to the sea;
Then hurrah for Liberty!
Says the Shan Van Vocht.

See Note Page 345.

The Wearin' o' the Green

OH, Paddy dear! and did ye hear the news that's goin' round?

The shamrock is forbid by law to grow on Irish ground!
No more St. Patrick's day we'll keep; his colour can't be seen,

For there's a cruel law ag'in' the Wearin' o' the Green!

I met with Napper Tandy, and he took me by the hand,
And he said, "How's poor ould Ireland, and how does she stand?"

"She's the most distressful country that ever yet was seen,
For they're hanging men and women there for the Wearin' o' the Green.

An' if the colour we must wear is England's cruel red,
Let it remind us of the blood that Ireland has shed;
Then pull the shamrock from your hat, and throw it on the sod,

An' never fear, 'twill take root there, though under foot 'tis trod.

When law can stop the blades of grass from growin' as they grow,

An' when the leaves in summer time their colour dare not show,

Then I will change the colour, too, I wear in my caubeen;
But till that day, plaise God, I'll stick to the Wearin' o' the Green.

The Rising of the Moon

“OH, THEN tell me, Shawn O’Farrall,
Tell me why you hurry so?”
“Hush, ma bouchal, hush and listen;”
And his cheeks were all a-glow:
“I bear orders from the Captain—
Get you ready quick and soon;
For the pikes must be together
At the Rising of the Moon.”

“Oh, then tell me, Shawn O’Farrall
Where the gathering is to be?”
“In the oul’ spot by the river
Right well known to you and me;
One word more—for signal token
Whistle up the marching tune,
With your pike upon your shoulder,
At the Rising of the Moon.”

Out from many a mud-wall cabin
Eyes were watching through the night:
Many a manly chest was throbbing
For the blessed warning light;
Murmurs passed along the valley
Like the Banshee’s lonely croon,
And a thousand blades were flashing
At the Rising of the Moon.

There, beside the singing river,
That dark mass of men were seen—
Far above the shining weapons
Hung their own beloved green.
Death to every foe and traitor!
Forward! strike the marching tune,
And hurrah, my boys, for freedom!
'Tis the Rising of the Moon."

Well they fought for poor Old Ireland,
And full bitter was their fate;
(Oh! what glorious pride and sorrow
Fill the name of Ninety-Eight!)
Yet, thank God, e'en still are beating
Hearts in manhood's burning noon,
Who would follow in their footsteps
At the Rising of the Moon.

The Croppy Boy

IT WAS early, early in the spring,
The birds did whistle and sweetly sing,
Changing their notes from tree to tree,
And the song they sang was Old Ireland free.

It was early, early in the night,
The yeoman cavalry gave me a fright;
The yeoman cavalry was my downfall
And taken was I by Lord Cornwall.

'Twas in the guard-house where I was laid
And in a parlor where I was tried;
My sentence passed and my courage low
When to Dungannon I was forced to go.

As I was passing by my father's door,
My brother William stood at the door;
My aged father stood at the door,
And my tender mother her hair she tore.

As I was walking up Wexford Street
My own first cousin I chanced to meet;
My own first cousin did me betray,
And for one bare guinea swore my life away.

My sister Mary heard the express,
She ran upstairs in her morning-dress—
Five hundred guineas I will lay down,
To see my brother safe in Wexford Town.

As I was walking up Wexford Hill,
Who could blame me to cry my fill?
I looked behind and I looked before,
But my tender mother I shall ne'er see more.

As I was mounted on the platform high,
My aged father was standing by;
My aged father did me deny,
And the name he gave me was the Croppy
Boy.

It was in Dungannon this young man died,
And in Dungannon his body lies;
And you good Christians that do pass by
Just drop a tear for the Croppy Boy.

See Note Page 345.

By Memory Inspired

BY Memory inspired,

And love of country fired,

The deeds of men I love to dwell upon;

And the patriotic glow

Of my spirits must bestow

A tribute to O'Connell that is gone, boys—gone:

Here's a memory to the friends that are gone!

In October Ninety-seven—

May his soul find rest in Heaven—

William Orr to execution was led on:

The jury, drunk, agreed

That Irish was his creed;

For perjury and threats drove them on, boys—on:

Here's the memory of John Mitchell that is gone!

In Ninety-eight—the month July—

The informer's pay was high;

When Reynolds gave the gallows brave MacCann;

But MacCann was Reynolds' first—

One could not allay his thirst;

So he brought up Bond and Byrne, that are gone, boys—gone:

Here's the memory of the friends that are gone!

We saw a nation's tears

Shed for John and Henry Shears;

Betrayed by Judas, Captain Armstrong;

We may forgive, but yet

We never can forget

The poisoning of Maguire that is gone, boys—gone:

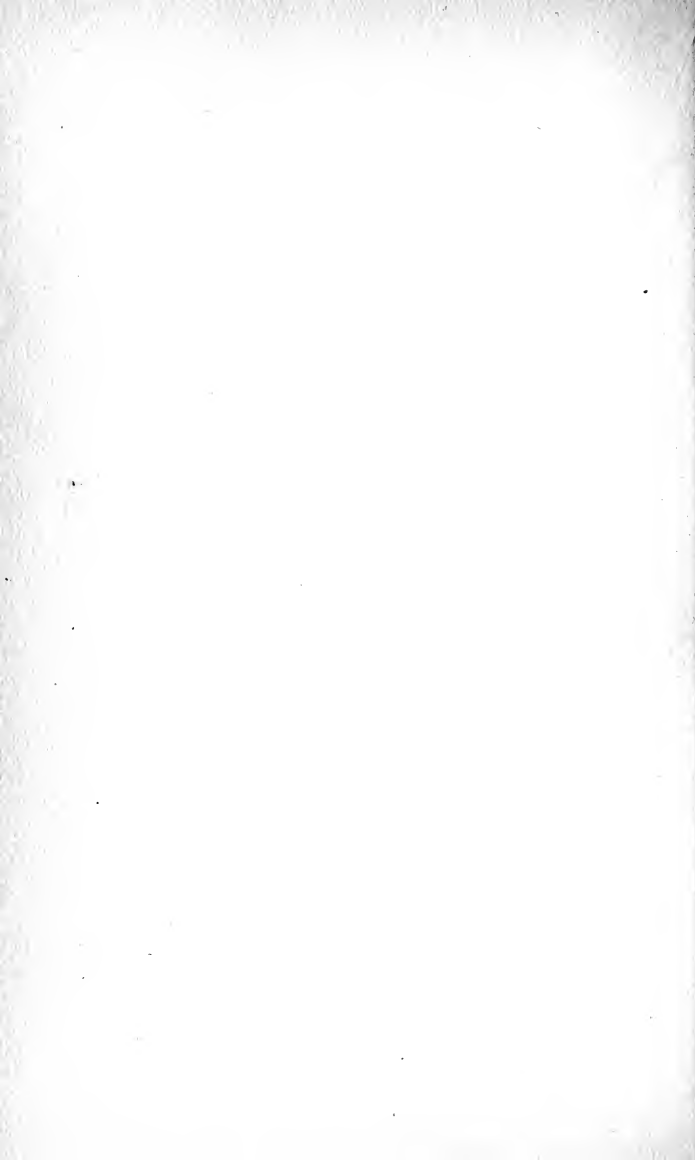
Our high Star and true Apostle that is gone!

How did Lord Edward die?
Like a man, without a sigh;
But he left his handiwork on Major Swan!
But Sirr, with steel-clad breast,
And coward heart at best,
Left us cause to mourn Lord Edward that is gone, boys—
gone:
Here's the memory of our friends that are gone!

September, Eighteen-three,
Closed this cruel history,
When Emmet's blood the scaffold flowed upon:
Oh, had their spirits been wise,
They might then realise
Their freedom, but we drink to Mitchell that is gone, boys—
gone:
Here's the memory of the friends that are gone!

PART III

THE CELTIC WORLD AND THE REALM
OF FAERY



Aimirgin's Invocation

I INVOKE the land of Ireland:
Much-coursed be the fertile sea,
Fertile be the fruit-strewn mountain,
Fruit-strewn be the showery wood,
Showery be the river of waterfalls,
Of waterfalls be the lake of deep pools,
Deep-pooled be the hill-top wall,
A well of tribes be the assembly,
An assembly of kings be Temair,
Temair be the hill of the tribes,
The tribes of the sons of Mil,
Of Mil of the ships, the barks!

Let the lofty bark be Ireland,
Lofty Ireland, darkly sung,
An incantation of great cunning:
The great cunning of the wives of Bres,
The wives of Bres, of Buaighe;
The great lady, Ireland,
Eremon hath conquered her,
I, Eber, have invoked for her.
I invoke the land of Ireland!

Translated by PROFESSOR MAC NEILL.
See Note Page 345.

St. Patrick's Breastplate

I ARISE to-day
Through the strength of heaven :
Light of sun,
Radiance of moon,
Splendor of fire,
Speed of lightning,
Swiftness of wind,
Depth of sea,
Stability of earth,
Firmness of rock.

I arise to-day
Through God's strength to pilot me :
God's might to uphold me,
God's wisdom to guide me,
God's eye to look before me,
God's ear to hear me,
God's word to speak for me,
God's hand to guard me,
God's way to lie before me,
God's shield to protect me,
God's host to save me
From snares of devils,
From temptations of vices,
From every one who shall wish me ill,
Afar and anear,
Alone and in a multitude.

Christ to shield me to-day
Against poison, against burning,
Against drowning, against wounding,
So that there may come to me abundance of reward.
Christ with me, Christ before me, Christ behind me,
Christ in me, Christ beneath me, Christ above me,
Christ on my right, Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down, Christ when I sit down, Christ when
I arise,
Christ in the heart of every man who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of every one who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.

I arise to-day
Through a mighty strength, the invocation of the Trinity,
Through belief in the threeness,
Through confession of the oneness
Of the Creator of Creation.

Translated by KUNO MEYER.

See Note Page 346.

In Praise of May

Ascribed to Fionn mac Cumhaill.

MAY-DAY! delightful day!
Bright colours play the vale along.
Now wakes at morning's slender ray
Wild and gay the blackbird's song.

Now comes the bird of dusty hue,
The loud cuckoo, the summer-lover;
Branchy trees are thick with leaves;
The bitter, evil time is over.

Swift horses gather nigh
Where half dry the river goes;
Tufted heather clothes the height;
Weak and white the bogdown blows.

Corncrake sings from eve to morn,
Deep in corn, a strenuous bard!
Sings the virgin waterfall,
White and tall, her one sweet word.

Loaded bees with puny power
Goodly flower-harvest win;
Cattle roam with muddy flanks;
Busy ants go out and in.

Through the wild harp of the wood
Making music roars the gale—
Now it settles without motion,
On the ocean sleeps the sail.

Men grow mighty in the May,
Proud and gay the maidens grow;
Fair is every wooded height;
Fair and bright the plain below.

A bright shaft has smit the streams,
With gold gleams the water-flag;
Leaps the fish, and on the hills
Ardor thrills the leaping stag.

Loudly carols the lark on high,
Small and shy, his tireless lay,
Singing in wildest, merriest mood,
Delicate-hued, delightful May.

Translated by T. W. ROLLESTON.

The Sleep-Song of Grainne Over Dermuid

When fleeing from Fionn Mac Cumhaill

SLEEP a little, a little little, thou needst feel no fear or
dread,
Youth to whom my love is given, I am watching near thy
head.

Sleep a little, with my blessing, Dermuid of the lightsome eye,
I will guard thee as thou dreamest, none shall harm while I
am by.

Sleep, O little lamb, whose homeland was the country of the
lakes,
In whose bosom torrents tremble, from whose sides the river
breaks.

Sleep, as slept the ancient poet, Dedach, minstrel of the
South,
When he snatched from Conall Cernach Eithne of the laugh-
ing mouth.

Sleep as slept the comely Finncha 'neath the falls of Assaroe,
Who, when stately Slaine sought him, laid the Hard-head
Failbe low.

Sleep in joy, as slept fair Aine, Gailan's daughter of the
west,
Where, amid the flaming torches, she and Duvach found their
rest.

Sleep as Dégha, who in triumph, ere the sun sang o'er the
land,
Stole the maiden he had craved for, plucked her from fierce
Deacall's hand.

Fold of Valour, sleep a little, Glory of the Western world;
I am wondering at thy beauty, marvelling how thy locks are
curled.

Like the parting of two children, bred together in one home,
Like the breaking of two spirits, if I did not see thee come.

Swirl the leaves before the tempest, moans the night-wind
o'er the lea,
Down its stony bed the streamlet hurries onward to the sea.

In the swaying boughs the linnet twitters in the darkling
light,
On the upland wastes of heather wings the grouse its heavy
flight.

In the marshland by the river sulks the otter in his den;
While the piping of the peewee sounds across the distant
fen.

On the stormy mere the wild-duck pushes outward from the
brake,
With her downy brood beside her seeks the centre of the
lake.

In the east the restless roe-deer bellows to his frightened
hind;
On thy track the wolf-hounds gather, sniffing up against the
wind.

Yet, O Dermuid, sleep a little, this one night our fear hath
fled,
Youth to whom my love is given, see, I watch beside thy
bed.

Translated by ELEANOR HULL.

See Note Page 346.

The Awakening of Dermuid

IN the sleepy forest where the bluebells
Smouldered dimly through the night,
Dermuid saw the leaves like glad green waters
At daybreak flowing into light,
And exultant from his love upspringing
Strode with the sun upon the height.

Glittering on the hilltops
He saw the sunlit rain
Drift as around the spindle
A silver-threaded skein,
And the brown mist whitely breaking
Where arrowy torrents reached the plain.

A maddened moon
Leapt in his heart and whirled the crimson tide
Of his blood until it sang aloud of battle
Where the querns of dark death grind,
Till it sang and scorned in pride
Love—the froth-pale blossom of the boglands
That flutters on the waves of the wandering wind.

Flower-quiet in the rush-strewn sheiling
At the dawntime Grainne lay,
While beneath the birch-topped roof the sunlight
Groped upon its way
And stooped above her sleeping white body
With a wasp-yellow ray.

The hot breath of the day awoke her,
And wearied of its heat
She wandered out by the noisy elms
On the cool mossy peat,
Where the shadowed leaves like pecking linnets
Nodded around her feet.

She leaned and saw in the pale-grey waters,
By twisted hazel boughs,
Her lips like heavy drooping poppies
In a rich redness drowse,
Then swallow—lightly touched the ripples
Until her wet lips were
Burning as ripened rowan berries
Through the white winter air.

Lazily she lingered
Gazing so,
As the slender osiers
Where the waters flow,
As green twigs of sally
Swaying to and fro.

Sleepy moths fluttered
In her dark eyes,
And her lips grew quieter
Than lullabies.
Swaying with the reedgrass
Over the stream
Lazily she lingered
Cradling a dream.

AUSTIN CLARKE,
From "The Vengeance of Finn."

The Lay of Prince Marvan

THERE is a sheeling hidden in the wood
Unknown to all save God;
An ancient ash-tree and a hazel-bush
Their sheltering shade afford.

Around the doorway's heather-laden porch
Wild honeysuckles twine;
Prolific oaks, within the forest's gloom,
Shed mast upon fat swine.

Many a sweet familiar woodland path
Comes winding to my door;
Lowly and humble is my hermitage,
Poor, and yet not too poor.

From the high gable-end my lady's throat
Her trilling chant outpours,
Her sombre mantle, like the ousel's coat,
Shows dark above my doors.

From the high oakridge where the roe-deer leaps
The river-banks between,
Renowned Mucraime and Red Roigne's plains
Lie wrapped in robes of green.

Here in the silence, where no care intrudes,
I dwell at peace with God;
What gift like this hast thou to give, Prince Guaire,
Were I to roam abroad?

The heavy branches of the green-barked yew
That seem to bear the sky;
The spreading oak, that shields me from the storm,
When winds rise high.

Like a great hostel, welcoming to all,
My laden apple-tree;
Low in the hedge, the modest hazel-bush
Drops ripest nuts for me.

Round the pure spring, that rises crystal clear,
Straight from the rock,
Wild goats and swine, red fox, and grazing deer,
At sundown flock.

The host of forest-dwellers of the soil
Trysting at night;
To meet them foxes come, a peaceful troop,
For my delight.

Like exiled princes, flocking to their home,
They gather round;
Beneath the river bank great salmon leap,
And trout abound.

Rich rowan clusters, and the dusky sloe,
The bitter, dark blackthorn,
Ripe whortle-berries, nuts of amber hue,
The cup-enclosed acorn.

A clutch of eggs, sweet honey, mead and ale,
God's goodness still bestows;
Red apples, and the fruitage of the heath,
His constant mercy shows.

The goodly tangle of the briar-trail
Climbs over all the hedge;
Far out of sight, the trembling waters wail
Through rustling rush and sedge.

Luxuriant summer spreads its coloured cloak
And covers all the land;
Bright blue-bells, sunk in woods of russet oak,
Their blooms expand.

The movements of the bright red-breasted wren,
A lovely melody!
Above my house, the thrush and cuckoo's strain
A chorus wakes for me.

The little music-makers of the world
Chafers and bees,
Drone answer to the tumbling torrent's roar
Beneath the trees.

From gable-ends, from every branch and stem,
Sounds sweetest music now;
Unseen, in restless flight, the lively wren
Flits 'neath the hazel-bough.

Deep in the firmament the sea-gulls fly,
One widely-circling wreath;
The cheerful cuckoo's call, the poult's reply,
Sound o'er the distant heath.

The lowing of the calves in summer-time,
Best season of the year!
Across the fertile plain, pleasant the sound,
Their call I hear.

Voice of the wind against the branchy wood
Upon the deep blue sky;
Most musical the ceaseless waterfall,
The swan's shrill cry.

No hired chorus, trained to praise its chief,
Comes welling up for me;
The music made for Christ the Ever-young,
Sounds forth without a fee.

Though great thy wealth, Prince Guaire, happier live
Those who can boast no hoard;
Who take at Christ's hand that which He doth give
As their award.

Far from life's tumult and the din of strife
I dwell with Him in peace,
Content and grateful, for Thy gifts, High Prince,
Daily increase.

(GUAIRE *replies*)

Wisely thou choosest, Marvan; I a king
Would lay my kingdom by,
With Colman's glorious heritage I'd part
To bear thee company!
Translated by ELEANOR HULL.

See Note Page 346.

*The Counsels of O'Riordan, the Rann
Maker*

THE choirs of Heaven are tokened in a harp-string,
A pigeon's egg is as crafty as the stars.
My heart is shaken by the crying of the lap-wing,
And yet the world is full of foolish wars.

There's gold on the whin-bush every summer morning.
There's struggling discourse in the grunting of a pig:
Yet churls will be scheming, and churls will be scorning,
And half the dim world is ruled by thimble-rig.

The luck of God is in two strangers meeting,
But the gates of Hell are in the city street
For him whose soul is not in his own keeping
And love a silver string upon his feet.

My heart is the seed of time, my veins are star-dust,
My spirit is the axle of God's dream.
Why should my august soul be worn or care-tost? . . .
Lo, God is but a lamp, and I his gleam.

There's little to be known, and that not kindly,
But an ant will burrow through a five-inch wall;
There's nothing rises up or falls down blindly:
That's a poor share of wisdom, but it's all.

T. D. O'BOLGER.

My Love, Oh, She Is My Love

SHE casts a spell, oh, casts a spell!
Which haunts me more than I can tell.
Dearer, because she makes me ill
Than who would will to make me well.

She is my store! oh, she my store!
Whose grey eye wounded me so sore,
Who will not place in mine her palm,
Nor love, nor calm me any more.

She is my pet, oh, she my pet!
Whom I can never more forget;
Who would not lose by me one moan,
Nor stone upon my cairn would set.

She is my roon, oh, she my roon!
Who tells me nothing, leaves me soon;
Who would not lose by me one sigh,
Were death and I within one room.

She is my dear, oh, she my dear!
Who cares not whether I be here.
Who will not weep when I am dead,
But makes me shed the silent tear.

Hard my case, oh, hard my case!
For in her eye no hope I trace,
She will not hear me any more,
But I adore her silent face.

She is my choice, oh, she my choice!
Who never made me to rejoice;
Who caused my heart to ache so oft,
Who put no softness in her voice.

Great my grief, oh, great my grief!
Neglected, scorned beyond belief,
By her who looks at me askance,
By her who grants me no relief.

She's my desire, oh, my desire!
More glorious than the bright sun's fire;
Who were than wild-blown ice more cold
Were I so bold as to sit by her.

She it is who stole my heart,
And left a void and aching smart;
But if she soften not her eye,
I know that life and I must part.

Translated by DOUGLAS HYDE.

At the Yellow Bohereen

AT THE Yellow Bohereen
Is my heart's secret queen,
Alone on her soft bed a-sleeping;
Each tress of her hair,
Than the King's gold more fair,
The dew from the grass might be sweeping.

I'm a man of Teig's race,
Who has watched her fair face;
And away from her ever I'm sighing,
And, oh, my heart's store,
Be not grieved ever more,
That for you a young man should be dying!

Should my love with me come
I would build her a home,
The finest e'er told of in Eirinn;
And 'tis then she would shine,
And her fame ne'er decline,
For beauty o'er all the palm bearing.

For in your bosom bright
Shines the pure, sunny light,
As on your smooth brow graceful ever;
And, oh, could I say
You're my own from this day,
Death's contest would frighten me never!

Translated by GEORGE PETRIE.

The Woman of Beare

EBBING, the wave of the sea
Leaves, where it wantoned before
Wan and naked the shore,
Heavy the clotted weed.
And my heart, woe is me!
Ebbs a wave of the sea.

I am the woman of Beare.
Foul am I that was fair,
Gold-embroidered smocks I had,
Now in rags am hardly clad.

Arms, now so poor and thin,
Staring bone and shrunken skin,
Once were lustrous, once caressed
Chiefs and warriors to their rest.

Not the sage's power, nor lone
Splendour of an aged throne,
Wealth I envy not, nor state.
Only women folk I hate.

On your heads, while I am cold,
Shines the sun of living gold
Flowers shall wreath your necks in May:
For me, every month is grey.

Yours the bloom: but ours the fire,
Even out of dead desire.
Wealth, not men, ye love; but when
Life was in us, we loved men.

Fair the men, and wild the manes
Of their coursers on the plains;
Wild the chariots rocked, when we
Raced by them for mastery.

Lone is Femen: vacant, bare
Stands in Bregon Ronan's chair.
And the slow tooth of the sky
Frets the stones where my dead lie.

The wave of the great sea talks;
Through the forest winter stalks;
Not to-day by wood and sea
Comes King Diarmuid here to me.

I know what my King does.
Through the shivering reeds, across
Fords no mortal strength may breast,
He rows—to how chill a rest!

Amen, Time ends all.
Every acorn has to fall.
Bright at feasts the candles were,
Dark is here the house of prayer.

I, that when the hour was mine
Drank with kings the mead and wine,
Drink whey-water now, in rags
Praying among shrivelled hags.

Amen, let my drink be whey,
Let me do God's will all day—
And, as upon God I call,
Turn my blood to angry gall.

Ebb, flood, and ebb: I know
Well the ebb, and well the flow,
And the second ebb, all three—
Have they not come home to me!

Came the flood that had for waves
Monarchs, mad to be my slaves,
Crested as by foam with bounds
Of wild steeds and leaping hounds.

Comes no more that flooding tide
To my silent dark fireside.
Guests are many in my hall,
But a hand has touched them all.

Well is with the isle that feels
Now the ocean backward steals:
But to me my ebbing blood
Brings again no forward flood.

Ebbing, the wave of the sea
Leaves, where it wantoned before,
Changed past knowing the shore,
Lean and lonely and grey.
And far and farther from me
Ebbs the wave of the sea.

Translated by STEPHEN GWYNN.

See Note Page 346.

Cuchullain's Lament Over Fardiad

PLAY was each, pleasure each,
Until Fardiad faced the beach;
One had been our student life,
One in strife of school our place,
One our gentle teacher's grace
Loved o'er all and each.

Play was each, pleasure each,
Until Fardiad faced the beach;
One had been our wonted ways,
One the praise for feat of fields,
Scatach gave two victor-shields
Equal prize to each.

Play was each, pleasure each,
Till Fardiad faced the beach;
Dear that pillar of pure gold
Who fell cold beside the ford,
Hosts of heroes felt his sword
First in battle's breach.

Play was each, pleasure each,
Till Fardiad faced the beach;
Lion fiery, fierce, and bright,
Wave whose might no thing withstands,
Sweeping with the shrieking sands
Horror o'er the beach.

Play was each, pleasure each,
Till Fardiad faced the beach;
Loved Fardiad, dear to me!
I shall dree his death for aye!
Yesterday a Mountain he—
But a shade to-day!

Translated by DR. GEORGE SIGERSON.

See Note Page 347.

King Cahal Mór of the Wine-Red Hand

I WALKED entranced
Through a land of Morn:
The sun, with wondrous excess of light,
Shone down and glanced
Over seas of corn
And lustrous gardens aleft and right.
Even in the clime
Of resplendent Spain,
Beams no such sun upon such a land;
But it was the time,
'Twas in the reign,
Of Cahal Mór of the Wine-red Hand.

Anon stood nigh
By my side a man
Of princely aspect and port sublime
Him queried I—
"Oh, my Lord and Khan,
What clime is this, and what golden time?"
When he—"The clime
Is a clime to praise,
The clime is Erin's, the green and bland;
And it is the time,
These be the days,
Of Cahal Mór of the Wine-red Hand."

Then saw I thrones
And circling fires,
And a Dome rose near me, as by a spell,
Whence flowed the tones
Of silver lyres,
And many voices in wreathèd swell;

And their thrilling chime
Fell on mine ears
As the heavenly hymn of an angel-band—
"It is now the time
These be the years,
Of Cahal Mór of the Wine-red Hand."

I sought the hall,
And behold!—a change
From light to darkness, from joy to woe!
Kings, nobles, all,
Looked aghast and strange;
The minstrel group sate in dumbest show!
Had some great crime
Wrought this dread amaze,
This terror? None seemed to understand
'Twas then the time,
We were in the days,
Of Cahal Mór of the Wine-red Hand.

I again walked forth;
But lo! the sky
Showed flecked with blood, and an alien sun
Glared from the north,
And there stood on high,
Amid his shorn beams, a skeleton!
It was by the stream
Of the castled Maine,
One Autumn eve, in the Teuton's land,
That I dreamed this dream
Of the time and reign
Of Cahal Mór of the Wine-red Hand.

Translated by JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

See Note Page 347.

Kincora

AH, WHERE, Kincora! is Brian the Great?
And where is the beauty that once was thine?
Oh, where are the princes and nobles that sate
At the feasts in thy halls, and drank the red wine,
Where, O Kincora?

Oh, where, Kincora! are thy valorous lords?
Oh, whither, thou Hospitable! are they gone?
Oh, where are the Dalcassians of the Golden Swords?
And where are the warriors Brian led on?
Where, O Kincora?

And where is Murrough, the descendant of kings—
The defeater of a hundred—the daringly brave—
Who set but slight store by jewels and rings—
Who swam down the torrent and laughed at its wave?
Where, O Kincora?

And where is Donogh, King Brian's worthy son?
And where is Conaing, the Beautiful Chief?
And Kian, and Corc? Alas! they are gone—
They have left me this night alone with my grief!
Left me, Kincora!

And where are the chiefs with whom Brian went forth,
The ne'er-vanquished son of Evin the Brave,
The great King of Onaght, renowned for his worth,
And the hosts of Baskinn, from the western wave?
Where, O Kincora?

Oh, where is Duvlann of the Swift-footed Steeds?
And where is Kian, who was son of Molloy?
And where is King Lonergan, the fame of whose deeds
In the red battlefield no time can destroy?
Where, O Kincora?

And where is that youth of majestic height,
The faith-keeping Prince of the Scots?—Even he,
As wide as his fame was, as great as was his might,
Was tributary, O Kincora, to thee!
Thee, O Kincora!

They are gone, those heroes of royal birth,
Who plundered no churches, and broke no trust,
'Tis weary for me to be living on earth
When they, O Kincora, lie low in the dust!
Low, O Kincora!

Oh, never again will Princes appear,
To rival the Dalcassians of the Cleaving Swords!
I can never dream of meeting afar or anear,
In the east or the west, such heroes and lords!
Never, O Kincora!

Oh, dear are the images my memory calls up
Of Brian Boru!—how he never would miss
To give me at the banquet the first bright cup!
Ah! why did he heap on me honor like this?
Why, O Kincora?

I am MacLiag, and my home is on the Lake;
Thither often, to that palace whose beauty is fled,
Came Brian to ask me, and I went for his sake.
Oh, my grief! that I should live, and Brian be dead
Dead, O Kincora!

Translated by JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

See Note Page 348.

The Grave of Rury

CLEAR as air, the western waters
evermore their sweet, unchanging song
Murmur in their stony channels
round O'Connor's sepulchre in Cong.

Crownless, hopeless, here he lingered;
year on year went by him like a dream,
While the far-off roar of conquest
murmured faintly like the singing stream.

Here he died, and here they tombed him
men of Fechin, chanting round his grave.
Did they know, ah! did they know it,
what they buried by the babbling wave?

Now above the sleep of Rury
holy things and great have passed away;
Stone by stone the stately Abbey
falls and fades in passionless decay.

Darkly grows the quiet ivy,
pale the broken arches glimmer through;
Dark upon the cloister-garden
dreams the shadow of the ancient yew.

Through the roofless aisles the verdure
flows, the meadow-sweet and fox-glove bloom.
Earth, the mother and consoler,
winds soft arms about the lonely tomb.

Peace and holy gloom possess him,
last of Gaelic monarchs of the Gael,
Slumbering by the young, eternal
river-voices of the western vale.

T. W. ROLLESTON.

See Note Page 348.

The Shadow House of Lugh

DREAM-FAIR, beside dream waters, it stands alone:
A winged thought of Lugh made its corner stone:
A desire of his heart raised its walls on high,
And set its crystal windows to flaunt the sky.

Its doors of the white bronze are many and bright,
With wonderous carven pillars for his Love's delight,
And its roof of the blue wings, the speckled red,
Is a flaming arc of beauty above her head.

Like a mountain through mist Lugh towers high,
The fiery-forked lightning is the glance of his eye,
His countenance is noble as the Sun-god's face—
The proudest chieftain he of a proud De Danaan race.

He bides there in peace now, his wars are all done—
He gave his hand to Balor when the death gate was won,
And for the strife-scarred heroes who wander in the shade,
His door lieth open, and the rich feast is laid.

He hath no vexing memory of blood in slanting rain,
Of green spears in hedges on a battle plain;
But through the haunted quiet his Love's silver words
Blow round him swift as wing-beats of enchanted birds.

A grey haunted wind is blowing in the hall,
And stirring through the shadowy spears upon the wall,
The drinking-horn goes round from shadowy lip to lip—
And about the golden methers shadowy fingers slip.

The Star of Beauty, she who queens it there;
Diademed, and wondrous long, her yellow hair.
Her eyes are twin-moons in a rose-sweet face,
And the fragrance of her presence fills all the place.

He plays for her pleasure on his harp's gold wire
The laughter-tune that leaps along in trills of fire;
She hears the dancing feet of *Sidhe* where a white moon
gleams,
And all her world is joy in the House of Dreams.

He plays for her soothing the Slumber-song:
Fine and faint as any dream it glides along:
She sleeps until the magic of his kiss shall rouse;
And all her world is quiet in the Shadow-house.

His days glide to night, and his nights glide to day:
With circling of the amber mead, and feasting gay;
In the yellow of her hair his dreams lie curled,
And her arms make the rim of his rainbow world.

ETHNA CARBERY.

See Note Page 348.

The King's Son

WHO rideth through the driving rain
At such a headlong speed?
Naked and pale he rides amain
Upon a naked steed.

Nor hollow nor height his going bars,
His wet steed shines like silk,
His head is golden to the stars
And his limbs are white as milk.

But, lo, he dwindles as the light
That lifts from a black mere,
And, as the fair youth wanes from sight,
The steed grows mightier.

What wizard by yon holy tree
Mutters unto the sky
Where Macha's flame-tongued horses flee
On hoofs of thunder by?

Ah, 'tis not holy so to ban
The youth of kingly seed:
Ah! woe, the wasting of a man
Who changes to a steed!

Nightly upon the Plain of Kings,
When Macha's day is nigh,
He gallops; and the dark wind brings
His lonely human cry.

THOMAS BOWD.

The Fairy Host

PURE white the shields their arms upbear,
With silver emblems rare o'ercast;
Amid blue glittering blades they go,
The horns they blow are loud of blast.

In well-instructed ranks of war
Before their Chief they proudly pace;
Coerulean spears o'er every crest—
A curly-tressed, pale-visaged race.

Beneath the flame /of their attack,
Bare and black turns every coast;
With such a terror to the fight
Flashes that mighty vengeful host.

Small wonder that their strength is great,
Since royal in estate are all,
Each hero's head a lion's fell—
A golden yellow mane lets fall.

Comely and smooth their bodies are,
Their eyes the starry blue eclipse,
The pure white crystal of their teeth
Laughs out beneath their thin red lips.

Good are they at man-slaying feats,
Melodious over meats and ale;
Of woven verse they wield the spell,
At chess-craft they excel the Gael.

Translated by ALFRED PERCIVAL GRAVES.

The Fairy Thorn

“**G**ET up, our Anna dear, from the weary spinning-wheel;
For your father's on the hill, and your mother is
asleep;

Come up above the crags, and we'll dance a Highland reel
Around the Fairy Thorn on the steep.”

At Anna Grace's door 'twas thus the maidens cried,
Three merry maidens fair in kirtles of the green;
And Anna laid the rock and the weary wheel aside,
The fairest of the four, I ween.

They're glancing through the glimmer of the quiet eve,
Away in milky wavings of neck and ankle bare;
The heavy-sliding stream in its sleepy song they leave,
And the crags in the ghostly air.

And linking hand-in-hand, and singing as they go,
The maids along the hillside have ta'en their fearless way,
Till they come to where the rowan trees in lonely beauty
grow

Beside the Fairy Hawthorn grey.

The Hawthorn stands between the ashes tall and slim,
Like matron with her twin grand-daughters at her knee;
The rowan berries cluster o'er her low head grey and dim
In ruddy kisses sweet to see.

The merry maidens four have ranged them in a row,
Between each lovely couple a stately rowan stem,
And away in mazes wavy, like skimming birds they go,
Oh, never carolled bird like them!

But solemn is the silence on the silvery haze
That drinks away their voices in echoless repose,
And dreamily the evening has stilled the haunted braes,
And dreamier the gloaming grows.

And sinking one by one, like lark-notes from the sky,
When the falcon's shadow saileth across the open shaw,
Are hushed the maidens' voices, as cowering down they lie
In the flutter of their sudden awe.

For, from the air above and the grassy ground beneath,
And from the mountain-ashes and the old white-thorn between,
A power of faint' enchantment doth through their beings
breathe,
And they sink down together on the green.

They sink together silent, and stealing side to side,
They fling their lovely arms o'er their drooping necks so
fair,
Then vainly strive again their naked arms to hide,
For their shrinking necks again are bare.

Thus clasped and prostrate all, with their heads together
bowed,
Soft o'er their bosoms beating—the only human sound—
They hear the silky footsteps of the silent fairy crowd,
Like a river in the air gliding round.

Nor scream can any raise, nor prayer can any say,
But wild, wild the terror of the speechless three—
For they feel fair Anna Grace drawn silently away,
By whom they dare not look to see.

They feel their tresses twine with her parting locks of gold,
And the curls elastic falling, as her head withdraws.
They feel her sliding arms from their tranced arms unfold,
But they dare not look to see the cause;

For heavy on their senses the faint enchantment lies
Through all that night of anguish and perilous amaze
And neither fear nor wonder can ope their quivering eyes,
Or their limbs from the cold ground raise;

Till out of night the earth has rolled her dewy side,
With every haunted mountain and streamy vale below;
When, as the mist dissolves in the yellow morningtide,
The maidens' trance dissolveth so.

Then fly the ghastly three as swiftly as they may,
And tell their tale of sorrow to anxious friends in vain—
They pined away and died within the year and day,
And ne'er was Anna Grace seen again.

SAMUEL FERGUSON.

The Fairy Lover

IT was by yonder thorn I saw the fairy host
(O low night wind, O wind of the west!)
My love rode by, there was gold upon his brow,
And since that day I can neither eat nor rest.

I dare not pray lest I should forget his face
(O black north wind blowing cold beneath the sky!)
His face and his eyes shine between me and the sun:
If I may not be with him I would rather die.

They tell me I am cursed and I will lose my soul,
(O red wind shrieking o'er the thorn-grown dún!)
But he is my love and I go to him to-night,
Who rides when the thorn glistens white beneath the moon.

He will call my name and lift me to his breast,
(Blow soft O wind 'neath the stars of the south!)
I care not for heaven and I fear not hell
If I have but the kisses of his proud red mouth.

MOIREEN FOX.

The Warnings

I WAS milking in the meadow when I heard the Banshee
keening:

Little birds were in the nest, lambs were on the lea,
Upon the brow o' the Fairy-hill a round gold moon was
leaning—

She parted from the esker as the Banshee keened for me.

I was weaving by the door-post, when I heard the Death-
watch beating:

And I signed the Cross upon me, and I spoke the Name of
Three.

High and fair, through cloud and air, a silver moon was fleet-
ing—

But the night began to darken as the Death-watch beat for
me.

I was sleepless on my pillow when I heard the Dead man
calling,

The Dead man that lies drowned at the bottom of the sea.

Down in the West, in wind and mist, a dim white moon was
falling—

Now must I rise and go to him, the Dead who calls on me.

ALICE FURLONG.

The Love-Talker

I MET the Love-Talker one eve in the glen,
He was handsomer than any of our handsome young
men,

His eyes were blacker than the sloe, his voice sweeter far
Than the crooning of old Kevin's pipes beyond in Cúolnagar.

I was bound for the milking with a heart fair and free—
My grief! my grief! that bitter hour drained the life from
me;

I thought him human lover, though his lips on mine were
cold,

And the breath of death blew keen on me within his hold.

I know not what way he came, no shadow fell behind,
But all the sighing rushes swayed beneath a faery wind
The thrush ceased its singing, a mist crept about,
We two clung together—with the world shut out.

Beyond the ghostly mist I could hear my cattle low,
The little cow from Ballina, clean as driven snow,
The dun cow from Kerry, the roan from Inisheer,
Oh, pitiful their calling—and his whispers in my ear!

His eyes were a fire; his words were a snare;
I cried my mother's name, but no help was there;
I made the blessed Sign; then he gave a dreary moan,
A wisp of cloud went floating by, and I stood alone.

Running ever through my head, is an old-time rune—
"Who meets the Love-Talker must weave her shroud soon."
My mother's face is furrowed with the salt tears that fall,
But the kind eyes of my father are the saddest sight of all.

I have spun the fleecy lint, and now my wheel is still,
The linen length is woven for my shroud fine and chill,
I shall stretch me on the bed where a happy maid I lay—
Pray for the soul of Mairé Og at dawning of the day!

ETHNA CARBERY.

The Green Hunters

THE Green Hunters went ridin';
They swept down the night
Through hollows of shadow
An' pools of moonlight;
Their steeds' shoes of soft silver,
They blew ne'er a horn,
But trampled a highway
Among the ripe corn.

I looked from the half-door,
They never saw me,
For each one kept wavin'
A slip of a tree;
'Twas black as the yewan,
An' whiter than may.
An' red as the sally
That goes the wind's way.

The Green Hunter came ridin'
Back to Gore Wood;
Though they heard my lips movin',
I stood where I stood.
Oh, what do they call him
The one rode behind?
For my heart's in his holdin',
My mind in his mind.

FLORENCE M. WILSON.

The Others

FROM our hidden places
By a secret path,
We come in the moonlight
To the side of the green rath.

There the night through
We take our pleasure,
Dancing to such a measure
As earth never knew.

To song and dance
And lilt without a name,
So sweetly breathed
'Twould put a bird to shame.

And many a young maiden
Is there, of mortal birth,
Her young eyes laden
With dreams of earth.

And many a youth entranced
Moves slowly in the wildered round,
His brave lost feet enchanted,
With the rhythm of faery sound.

Music so forest wild
And piercing sweet would bring
Silence on blackbirds singing
Their best in the ear of spring.

And now they pause in their dancing,
And look with troubled eyes,
Earth straying children
With sudden memory wise.

They pause, and their eyes in the moonlight
With fairy wisdom cold,
Grow dim and a thought goes fluttering
In the hearts no longer old.

And then the dream forsakes them,
And sighing, they turn anew,
As the whispering music takes them,
To the dance of the elfin crew.

O many a thrush and a blackbird
Would fall to the dewy ground,
And pine away in silence
For envy of such a sound.

So the night through
In our sad pleasure,
We dance to many a measure,
That earth never knew.

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN.

The Shadow People

OLD lame Bridget doesn't hear
Fairy music in the grass
When the gloaming's on the mere
And the shadow people pass:
Never hears their slow, grey feet
Coming from the village street
Just beyond the parson's wall,
Where the clover globes are sweet
And the mushroom's parasol
Opens in the moonlit rain.
Every night I hear them call
From their long and merry train.
Old lame Bridget says to me,
"It's just your fancy, child."
She cannot believe I see
Laughing faces in the wild,
Hands that twinkle in the sedge
Where the finny minnows quiver,
Shaping on a blue wave's ledge
Bubble foam to sail the river.
And the sunny hands to me
Beckon ever, beckon ever.
Oh! I would be wild and free
And with the shadow people be.

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE.

The Fairies

UP THE airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather!
Down along the rocky shore
Some make their home,
They live on crispy pancakes
Of yellow tide-foam;
Some in the reeds
Of the black mountain lake,
With frogs for their watch-dogs,
All night awake.

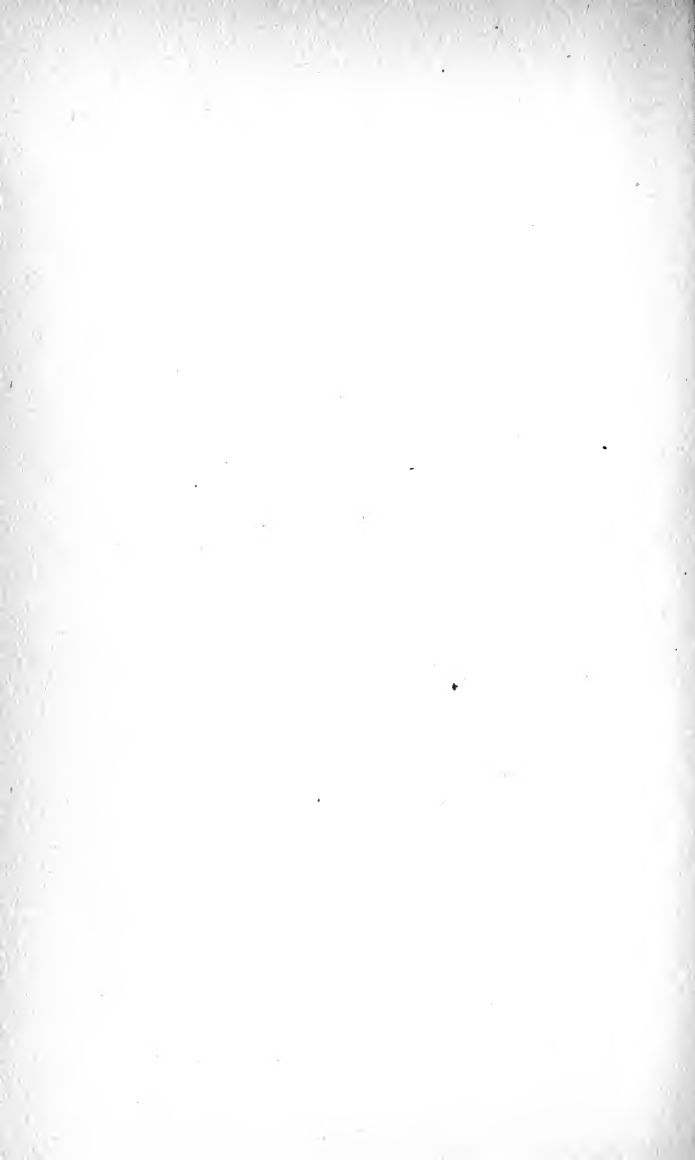
High on the hill-top
The old King sits;
He is now so old and gray
He's nigh lost his wits.
With a bridge of white mist
Columbkil he crosses,
On his stately journeys
From Slieveleague to Rosses;
Or going up with music
On cold starry nights,
To sup with the Queen
Of the gay Northern Lights.

They stole little Bridget
For seven years long;
When she came down again
Her friends were all gone.
They took her lightly back,
Between the night and morrow,
They thought that she was fast asleep,
But she was dead with sorrow.
They have kept her ever since
Deep within the lake,
On a bed of flag-leaves,
Watching till she wake.

By the craggy hill-side,
Through the mosses bare,
They have planted thorn-trees
For pleasure here and there.
Is any man so daring
As dig them up in spite,
He shall find their sharpest thorns
In his bed at night.

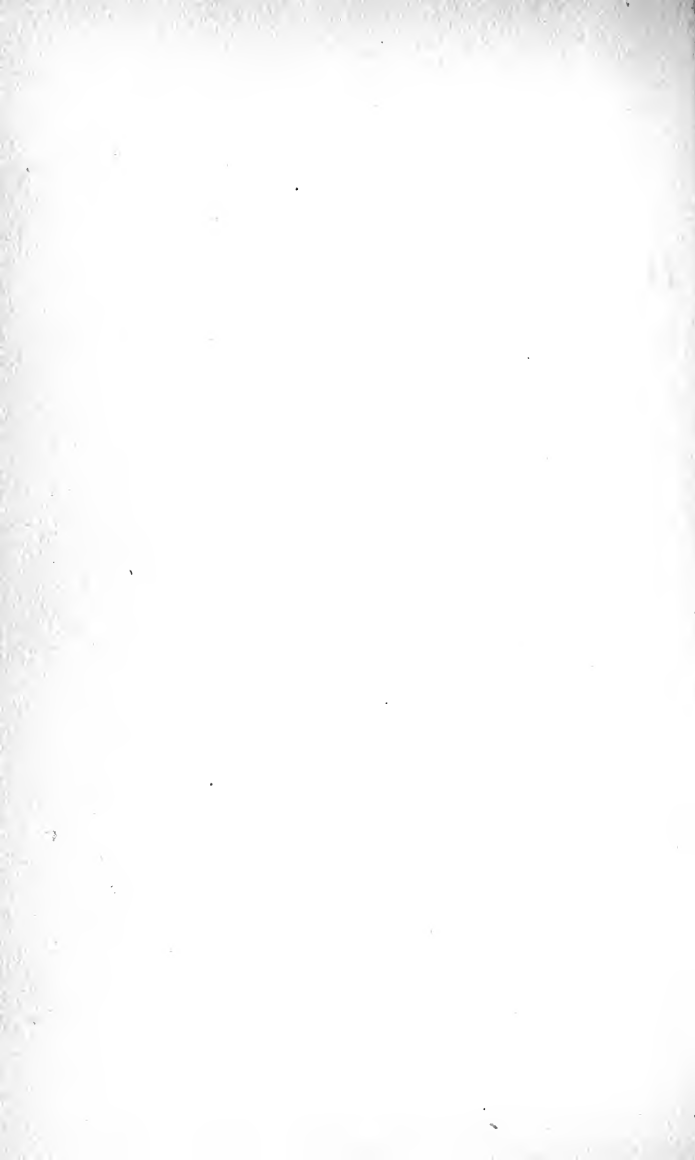
Up the airy mountain,
Down the rushy glen,
We daren't go a-hunting
For fear of little men;
Wee folk, good folk,
Trooping all together;
Green jacket, red cap,
And white owl's feather.

WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.



PART IV

POEMS OF PLACE AND POEMS OF EXILE



The Triad of Things Not Decreed

HAPPY the stark bare wood on the hill of Bree!
To its grey branch, green of the May: song after sigh:
Laughter of wings where the wind went with a cry
My sorrow! Song after sigh comes not to me.

Happy the dry wide pastures by Ahenree!
To them, in the speckled twilight, dew after drouth:
White clover, a fragrance in the dumb beast's mouth.
My sorrow! Dew after drouth comes not to me.

Happy Oilean Acla in the ample sea!
To its yellow shore, long-billowed flood after ebb:
Flash of the fish, silver in the sloak weeds' web,
My sorrow! Flood after ebb comes not to me.

ALICE FURLONG.

The Starling Lake

MY SORROW that I am not by the little dún
By the lake of the starlings at Rosses under the hill,
And the larks there, singing over the fields of dew,
Or evening there and the sedges still.
For plain I see now the length of the yellow sand,
And Lissadell far off and its leafy ways,
And the holy mountain whose mighty heart
Gathers into it all the coloured days.
My sorrow that I am not by the little dún
By the lake of the starlings at evening when all is still,
And still in whispering sedges the herons stand.
'Tis there I would nestle at rest till the quivering moon
Uprose in the golden quiet over the hill.

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN.

Bogac Bán

A WOMAN had I seen, as I rode by,
Stacking her turf and chanting an old song;
But now her voice came to me like a cry
Wailing an old immeasurable wrong,
Riding the road thro' Bogac Bán.

Like a grey ribbon over the dark world,
Lying along the bog that rose each side,
The white road strayed upon the earth, and curled,
Staying its journey where the hills abide,
Riding the road thro' Bogac Bán.

It was not that the Night had laid her cloak
About the valley, going thro' the sky,
And yet a dimness like a distant smoke
Had fallen on the Earth as I rode by,
Riding the road thro' Bogac Bán.

Sweeping the sides of the mountains gaunt and high,
Floating about their faces in the pool,
A shadowy presence with a rustling sigh
Crept thro' the valley till the valley was full:
My horse's hoofs fell softy as on wool:
Riding the road thro' Bogac Bán.

In musical measures like an echo dim
The hoisting held its secret path unseen:
Slaibh Mór looked down on Mám, and Mám to him
Looked up, with Loch nanEan between:
Riding the road thro' Bogac Bán.

A new world and a new scene mixed its power
With the old world and the old scene of Earth's face
A doorway had been folded back an hour;
And silver lights fell with a secret grace
Where I endeavoured the white path to trace,
Riding the road thro' Bogac Bán.

Within my mind a sudden joy had birth,
For I had found an infinite company there:
The hosting of the companies of the earth,
The hosting of the companies of the air,
Treading the road thro' Bogac Bán.
The white, strange road thro' Bogac Bán.

DARRELL FIGGIS.

Killarney

IS THERE one desires to hear
If within the shores of Eire
Eyes may still behold the scene
Far from Fand's enticements?

Let him seek the southern hills
And those lakes of loveliest water
Where the richest blooms of Spring
Burn to reddest Autumn:
And the clearest echo sings
Notes a goddess taught her.

Ah! 'twas very long ago,
And the words are now denied her:
But the purple hillsides know
Still the tones delightful,
And their breasts, impassioned, glow
As were Fand beside them.

And though many an isle be fair,
Fairer still is Innisfallen,
Since the hour Cuchullain lay
In the bower enchanted.
See! the ash that waves to-day.
Fand its grandsire planted.

When from wave to mountain-top
All delight thy sense bewilders,
Thou shalt own the wonders wrought
Once by her skilled fingers,
Still, though many an age be gone,
Round Killarney lingers.

WILLIAM LARMINIE.

See Note Page 348.

The Hills of Cualann

IN THE youth of summer
The hills of Cualann
Are two golden horns,
Two breasts of childing,
Two tents of light

In the ancient winter
They are two rusted swords,
Two waves of darkness,
Two moons of ice.

JOSEPH CAMPBELL.

Ardan Mór

AS I was climbing Ardan Mór
From the shore of Sheelin lake,
I met the herons coming down
Before the water's wake.

And they were talking in their flight
Of dreamy ways the herons go
When all the hills are withered up
Nor any waters flow.

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE.

Clonmacnoise

IN a quiet water'd land, a land of roses,
 Stands Saint Kieran's city fair;
And the warriors of Erin in their famous generations
 Slumber there.

There beneath the dewy hillside sleep the noblest
 Of the clan of Conn,
Each below his stone with name in branching Ogham
 And the sacred knot thereon.

There they laid to rest the seven Kíngs of Tara,
 There the sons of Cairbre sleep—
Battle-banners of the Gael that in Kieran's plain of crosses
 Now their final hosting keep.

And in Clonmacnoise they laid the men of Teffia,
 And right many a lord of Breagh;
Deep the sod above Clan Creide and Clan Conaill,
 Kind in hall and fierce in fray.

Many and many a son of Conn the Hundred-fighter
 In the red earth lies at rest;
Many a blue eye of Clan Colman the turf covers,
 Many a swan-white breast.

Translated by T. W. ROLLESTON.

See Note Page 349.

The Little Waves of Breffny

THE grand road from the mountain goes shining to the sea,
And there is traffic in it and many a horse and cart,
But the little roads of Cloonagh are dearer far to me,
And the little roads of Cloonagh go rambling through my
heart.

A great storm from the ocean goes shouting o'er the hill,
And there is glory in it and terror on the wind,
But the haunted air of twilight is very strange and still,
And the little winds of twilight are dearer to my mind.

The great waves of the Atlantic sweep storming on their way,
Shining green and silver with the hidden herring shoal,
But the Little Waves of Breffny have drenched my heart in
spray,
And the Little Waves of Breffny go stumbling through my
soul.

EVA GORE-BOOTH.

Muckish Mountain (The Pig's Back)

LIKE a sleeping swine upon the skyline,
Muckish, thou art shadowed out,
Grubbing up the rubble of the ages
With your broken, granite snout.

Muckish, greatest pig in Ulster's oakwoods,
Littered out of rock and fire,
Deep you thrust your mottled flanks for cooling
Underneath the peaty mire.

Long before the Gael was young in Ireland,
You were ribbed and old and grey,
Muckish, you have long outstayed his staying,
You have seen him swept away.

Muckish, you will not forget the people
Of the laughing speech and eye,
They who gave you name of Pig-back-mountain
And the Heavens for a sty!

SHANE LESLIE.

The Bog Lands

THE purple heather is the cloak
God gave the bogland brown,
But man has made a pall o' smoke
To hide the distant town.

Our lights are long and rich in change,
Unscreened by hill or spire,
From primrose dawn, a lovely range,
To sunset's farewell fire.

No morning bells have we to wake
Us with their monotone,
But windy calls of quail and crake
Unto our beds are blown.

The lark's wild flourish summons us
To work before the sun;
At eve the heart's lone Angelus
Blesses our labour done.

We cleave the sodden, shelving bank
In sunshine and in rain,
That men by winter-fires may thank
The wielders of the slane.

Our lot is laid beyond the crime
That sullies idle hands;
So hear we through the silent time
God speaking sweet commands.

Brave joys we have and calm delight—
For which tired wealth may sigh—
The freedom of the fields of light,
The gladness of the sky.

And we have music, oh, so quaint!
The curlew and the plover,
To tease the mind with pipings faint
No memory can recover;

The reeds that pine about the pools
In wind and windless weather;
The bees that have no singing-rules
Except to buzz together.

And prayer is here to give us sight
To see the purest ends;
Each evening through the brown-turf light
The Rosary ascends.

And all night long the cricket sings
The drowsy minutes fall,—
The only pendulum that swings
Across the crannied wall.

Then we have rest, so sweet, so good,
The quiet rest you crave;
The long, deep bogland solitude
That fits a forest's grave;

The long, strange stillness, wide and deep,
Beneath God's loving hand,
Where, wondering at the grace of sleep,
The Guardian Angels stand.

WILLIAM A. BYRNE.

The Bells of Shandon

WITH deep affection and recollection
I often think of the Shandon bells,
Whose sounds so wild would, in days of childhood,
Fling round my cradle their magic spells.
On this I ponder, where'er I wander,
And thus grow fonder, sweet Cork, of thee,
With thy bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters of the river Lee.

I have heard bells chiming full many a clime in,
Tolling sublime in cathedral shrine;
While at a glib rate brass tongues would vibrate,
But all their music spoke nought to thine;
For memory, dwelling on each proud swelling
Of the belfry knelling its bold notes free,
Made the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters of the River Lee.

I have heard bells tolling "old Adrian's mole" in,
Their thunder rolling from the Vatican,
With cymbals glorious, swinging uproarious
In the gorgeous turrets of Notre Dame;
But thy sounds were sweeter than the dome of Peter
Flings o'er the Tiber, pealing solemnly.
Oh! the bells of Shandon
Sound far more grand on
The pleasant waters of River Lee.

There's a bell in Moscow, while on tower and Kiosk, O!
In St. Sophia the Turkman gets,
And loud in the air calls men to prayer
From the tapering summit of tall minarets.
Such empty phantom I freely grant 'em,
But there's an anthem more dear to me:
'Tis the bells of Shandon,
That sound so grand on
The pleasant waters of the River Lee.

FRANCIS SYLVESTER MAHONY.
(Father Prout.)

Colum-Cille's Farewell to Ireland

ALAS for the voyage, O High King of Heaven,
Enjoined upon me,
For that I on the red plain of bloody Cooldrevin
Was present to see.

How happy the son is of Dima; no sorrow
For him is designed,
He is having, this hour, round his own hill in Durrow,
The wish of his mind.

The sounds of the winds in the elms, like strings of
A harp being played,
The note of a blackbird that claps with the wings of
Delight in the shade.

With him in Ros-Grencha the cattle are lowing
At earliest dawn,
On the brink of the summer the pigeons are cooing
And doves in the lawn.

Three things am I leaving behind me, the very
Most dear that I know,
Tir-Leedach I'm leaving, and Durrow and Derry;
Alas, I must go!

Yet my visit and feasting with Comgall have eased me
At Cainneach's right hand,
And all but thy government, Eiré, have pleased me,
Thou waterful land.

Translated by DOUGLAS HYDE.

See Note Page 349.

John O'Dwyer of the Glen

BLITHE the bright dawn found me,
Rest with strength had crown'd me,
Sweet the birds sang around me
Sport was their toil.

The horn its clang was keeping,
Forth the fox was creeping,
Round each dame stood weeping,
O'er the prowler's spoil.

Hark! the foe is calling,
Fast the woods are falling,
Scenes and sights appalling
Mark the wasted soil.

War and confiscation
Curse the fallen nation;
Gloom and desolation
Shade the lost land o'er,

Chill the winds are blowing,
Death aloft is going,
Peace or hope seems growing
For our race no more.

Hark! the foe is calling,
Fast the woods are falling,
Scenes and sights appalling
Throng the blood-stained shore

Nobles once high-hearted,
From their homes have parted,
Scattered, scared, and started
By a base-born band.

Spots that once were cheering,
Girls beloved, endearing,
Friends from whom I'm steering,
Take this parting tear.

Translated by THOMAS FURLONG.

See Note Page 349.

A Farewell to Patrick Sarsfield, Earl of Lucan

FAREWELL, O Patrick Sarsfield, may luck be on your path!
Your camp is broken up, your work is marred for years;
But you go to kindle into flame the King of France's wrath,
Though you leave sick Eire in tears—

Och, ochone!

May the white sun and moon rain glory on your head,
All hero as you are, and holy man of God!
To you the Saxons owe a many an hour of dread
In the land you have often trod—

Och, ochone!

The Son of Mary guard, and bless you to the end!
'Tis altered is the time when your legions were astir,
When at Cullen you were hailed as conqueror and friend,
And you crossed Narrow-water near Birr,—

Och, ochone!

I'll journey to the north, over mount, moor, and wave;
'Twas there I first beheld drawn up, in file and line,
The brilliant Irish hosts; they were bravest of the brave.
But alas, they scorned to combine—

Och, ochone!

I saw the royal Boyne when his billows flashed with blood
I fought at Graine Og, when a thousand horsemen fell;
On the dark empurpled plain of Aughrim, too, I stood,
On the plain by Tubberdonny's well—

Och, ochone!

To the heroes of Limerick, the City of the Fights,
Be my best blessing borne on the wings of the air;
We had card-playing there o'er our camp fires at night,
And the Word of Life, too, and prayer—

Och, ochone!

But for you, Londerderry, may plague smite and slay
Your people! May ruin desolate you stone by stone!
Through you there's many a gallant youth lies coffinless to-
day

With the winds for mourners alone—

Och, ochone!

I clomb the high hill on a fair summer noon,
And saw the Saxons muster, clad in armour blinding bright:
Oh, rage withheld my hand, or gunsman and dragoon
Should have supped with Satan that night!—

Och, ochone!

How many a noble soldier, how many a cavalier,
Careered along this road, seven fleeting weeks ago,
With silver-hilted sword, with matchlock and with spear,
Who now, mavrone! lieth low—

Och, ochone!

All hail to thee, Beinn Eidir but ah, on thy brow
I see a limping soldier, who battled and who bled
Last year in the cause of the Stuart, though now
The worthy is begging his bread—

Och, ochone!

And Diarmid oh, Diarmid he perished in the strife;
His head it was spiked upon a halberd high;
His colours they were trampled: he had no chance of life
If the Lord God Himself stood by!—

Och, ochone!

But most, oh my woe I lament and lament
For the ten valient heroes who dwelt nigh the Nore,
And my three blessed brothers; they left me and went
To the wars, and returned no more—

Och, ochone!

On the bridge of the Boyne was our first overthrow;
By Slaney the next, for we battled without rest;
The third was at Aughrim. O Eire! thy woe
Is a sword in my bleeding breast—

Och, ochone!

Oh, the roof above our heads, it was barbarously fired,
While the black Orange guns blazed and bellowed around!
And as volley followed volley, Colonel Mitchel inquired
Whether Lucan still stood his ground?—

Och, ochone!

But O'Kelly still remains, to defy and to toil,
He has memories that hell won't permit him to forget,
And a sword that will make the blue blood flow like oil
Upon many an Aughrim yet!—

Och, ochone!

And I never shall believe that my fatherland can fall
With the Burkes, and the Dukes, and the son of Royal James,
And Talbot, the captain, and Sarsfield above all,
The beloved of damsels and dames—

Och, ochone!

Translated by JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

See Note Page 349.

Fontenoy. 1745

I.—Before the Battle; night.

OH, BAD the march, the weary march, beneath these alien
skies,
But good the night, the friendly night, that soothes our tired
eyes.
And bad the war, the tedious war, that keeps us sweltering
here,
But good the hour, the friendly hour, that brings the battle
near.
That brings us on the battle, that summons to their share
The homeless troops, the banished men, the exiled sons of
Clare.

Oh, little Corca Bascinn, the wild, the bleak, the fair!
Oh, little stony pastures, whose flowers are sweet, if rare!
Oh, rough the rude Atlantic, the thunderous, the wide,
Whose kiss is like a soldier's kiss which will not be denied!
The whole night long we dream of you, and waking think
we're there,—
Vain dream, and foolish waking, we never shall see Clare.

The wind is wild to-night, there's battle in the air;
The wind is from the west, and it seems to blow from Clare.
Have you nothing, nothing for us, loud brawler of the night?
No news to warm our heart-strings, to speed us through the
fight?
In this hollow, star-pricked darkness, as in the sun's hot
glare,
In sun-tide, in star-tide, we thirst, we starve for Clare!

Hark! yonder through the darkness one distant rat-tat-tat!
The old foe stirs out there, God bless his soul for that!
The old foe musters strongly, he's coming on at last,
And Clare's Brigade may claim its own wherever blows fall
fast.

Send us, ye western breezes, our full, our rightful share,
For Faith, and Fame, and Honour, and the ruined hearths of
Clare.

EMILY LAWLESS.

See Note Page 350.

II.—After the Battle; early dawn, Clare coast.

MARY MOTHER, shield us! Say, what men are ye,
Sweeping past so swiftly on this morning sea?"
"Without sails or rowlocks merrily we glide
Home to Corca Bascinn on the brimming tide."

"Jesus save you, gentry! why are you so white,
Sitting all so straight and still in this misty light?"
"Nothing ails us, brother; joyous souls are we,
Sailing home together, on the morning sea."

"Cousins, friends, and kinsfolk, children of the land,
Here we come together, a merry, rousing band;
Sailing home together from the last great fight,
Home to Clare from Fontenoy, in the morning light.

"Men of Corca Bascinn, men of Clare's Brigade,
Harken stony hills of Clare, hear the charge we made;
See us come together, singing from the fight,
Home to Corca Bascinn, in the morning light."

EMILY LAWLESS.

In Spain

YOUR sky is a hard and a dazzling blue,
Your earth and sands are a dazzling gold,
And gold or blue is the proper hue,
You say for a swordsman bold.

In the land I have left the skies are cold,
The earth is green, the rocks are bare,
Yet the devil may hold all your blue and your gold
Were I only once back there!

EMILY LAWLESS.

In Spain: Drinking Song

MANY are praised, and some are fair,
But the fairest of all is *She*,
And he who misdoubts let him have a care,
For her liegemen sworn are we!
Then Ho! for the land that is green and grey,
The land of all lands the best,
For the South is bright and the East is gay,
But the sun shines last in the West,
The West!
The sun shines last in the West!

A queen is she, though a queen forlorn,
A queen of tears from her birth,
Ragged and hungry, woeful and worn,
Yet the fairest Fair on the earth.

Then here's to the land that is green and grey,
The land of all lands the best!
For the South is bright, and the East is gay,
But the sun shines last in the West,
The West!
The sun shines last in the West!

EMILY LAWLESS.

The Battle Eve of the Irish Brigade

THE mess-tent is full, and the glasses are set,
And the gallant Count Thomond is president yet;
The vet'ran arose, like an uplifted lance,
Crying—"Comrades, a health to the monarch of France!"
With bumpers and cheers they have done as he bade
For King Louis is loved by the Irish Brigade.

"A health to King James," and they bent as they quaffed,
"Here's to George the Elector," and fiercely they laughed,
"Good luck to the girls we wooed long ago,
Where Shannon, and Barrow, and Blackwater flow;"
"God prosper Old Ireland,"—you'd think them afraid,
So pale grew the chiefs of the Irish Brigade.

"But surely, that light cannot be from our lamp
And that noise—are they *all* getting drunk in the camp?"
"Hurrah! boys, the morning of battle is come,
And the *generale's* beating on many a drum."
So they rush from the revel to join the parade:
For the van is the right of the Irish Brigade.

They fought as they revelled, fast, fiery and true,
And, though victors, they left on the field not a few;
And they, who survived, fought and drank as of yore,
But the land of their heart's hope they never saw more;
For in far foreign fields, from Dunkirk to Belgrade,
Lie the soldiers and chiefs of the Irish Brigade.

THOMAS DAVIS.

The Fair Hills of Ireland

A PLENTEOUS place is Ireland for hospitable cheer,
Uileacán dubh O!

Where the wholesome fruit is bursting from the yellow barley ear;

Uileacán dubh O!

There is honey in the trees where her misty vales expand,
And her forest paths in summer are by falling waters fanned;
There is dew at high noontide there, and springs i' the yellow sand,

On the fair hills of holy Ireland.

Curled he is and ringleted, and plaited to the knee,

Uileacán dubh O!

Each captain who comes sailing across the Irish sea;

Uileacán dubh O!

And I will make my journey, if life and health but stand
Unto that pleasant country, that fresh and fragrant strand,
And leave your boasted braveries, your wealth and high command,

For the fair hills of holy Ireland.

Large and profitable are the stacks upon the ground,

Uileacán dubh O!

The butter and the cream do wonderously abound,

Uileacán dubh O!

The cresses on the water and the sorrels are at hand,
And the cuckoo's calling daily his note of music bland
And the bold thrush sings so bravely his song i' the forests
grand,
On the fair hills of holy Ireland.

Translated by SAMUEL FERGUSON.

See Note Page 350.

The Winding Banks of Erne

A DIEU to Belashanny, where I was bred and born;
Go where I may I'll think of you, as sure as night and
morn:

The kindly spot, the friendly town, where every one is known,
And not a face in all the place but partly seems my own;
There's not a house or window, there's not a field or hill,
But east or west, in foreign lands, I'll recollect them still;
I leave my warm heart with you, though my back I'm forced
to turn—

Adieu to Belashanny, and the winding banks of Erne!

No more on pleasant evenings we'll saunter down the Mall,
When the trout is rising to the fly, the salmon to the fall.
The boat comes straining on her net, and heavily she creeps,
Cast off, cast off—she feels the oars, and to her berth she
sweeps;

Now fore and aft keep hauling, and gathering up the clew,
Till a silver wave of salmon rolls in among the crew
Then they may sit, with pipes a-lit, and many a joke and
yarn:

Adieu to Belashanny, and the winding banks of Erne!

The music of the waterfall, the mirror of the tide,
When all the green-hill'd harbour is full from side to side,
From Portnasun to Bulliebawns, and round the Abbey Bay,
From rocky Inis Saimer to Coolnargit sandhills grey;
While far upon the southern line, to guard it like a wall,
The Leitrim mountains clothed in blue gaze calmly over all,
And watch the ship sail up or down, the red flag at her
stern—

Adieu to these, adieu to all the winding banks of Erne!

Farewell to you, Kildoney lads, and them that pull an oar,
A lugsail set, or haul a net, from the point to Mullaghmore;
From Killybegs to bold Slieve-League, that ocean mountain
steep,
Six hundred yards in air aloft, six hundred in the deep;
From Dooran to the Fairy Bridge, and round by Tullen
strand,
Level and long, and white with waves, where gull and curlew
stand;
Head out to sea, when on your lee the breakers you dis-
cern—
Adieu to all the billowy coast and the winding banks of
of Erne!

Farewell, Coolmore, Bundoran! and your summer crowds that
run
From inland homes to see with joy the Atlantic setting sun;
To breathe the buoyant salted air, and sport among the
waves;
To gather shells on sandy beach, and tempt the gloomy
caves;
To watch the flowing, ebbing tide, the boats, the crabs, the
fish;
Young men and maids to meet and smile, and form a tender
wish;
The sick and old in search of health, for all things have their
turn—
And I must quit my native shore and the winding banks of
Erne!

Farewell to every white cascade from the Harbour to Belleek,
And every pool where fins may rest, and ivy-shaded creek;
The sloping fields, the lofty rocks, where ash and holly
grow,

The one split yew-tree gazing on the curving flood below;
The Lough that winds through islands under Turaw mountain green

And Castle Caldwell's stretching woods, with tranquil bays
between;

And Breesie Hill, and many a pond among the heath and
fern—

For I must say adieu—adieu to the winding banks of Erne!

The thrush will call through Camlin groves the live-long summer day;

The waters run by mossy cliff, and banks with wild flowers
gay;

The girls will bring their work and sing beneath a twisted
thorn,

Or stray with sweethearts down the path among the growing
corn;

Along the riverside they go, where I have often been—

O, never shall I see again the days that I have seen!

A thousand chances are to one I never may return—

Adieu to Belashanny, and the winding banks of Erne!

Adieu to evening dances, where merry neighbours meet,
And the fiddle says to boys and girls, "get up and shake
your feet!"

To shanachas and wise old talk of Erin's days gone by
Who trench'd the rath on such a hill, and where the bones may
lie
Of saint, or king, or warrior chief; with tales of fairy
power,
And tender ditties sweetly sung to pass the twilight hour.
The mournful song of exile is now for me to learn—
Adieu, my dear companions on the winding banks of Erne!

Now measure from the Commons down to each end of the
Purt,
Round the Abbey, Moy, and Knather,—I wish no one any
hurt;
The Main Street, Back Street, College Lane, the Mall and
Portnasun,
If any foes of mine are there, I pardon every one.
I hope that man and womankind will do the same by me;
For my heart is sore and heavy at voyaging the sea.
My loving friends I'll bear in mind, and often fondly turn
To think of Belashanny and the winding banks of Erne!

If ever I'm a money'd man, I mean, please God, to cast
My golden anchor in the place where youthful years were
past;
Though heads that now are black and brown must meanwhile
gather grey,
New faces rise by every hearth, and old ones drop away—
Yet dearer still that Irish hill than all the world beside;
It's home, sweet home, where'er I roam, through lands and
waters wide.
And if the Lord allows me, I surely will return
To my native Belashanny, and the winding banks of Erne!
WILLIAM ALLINGHAM.

Corrymeela

OVER here in England I'm helpin' wi' the hay,
And I wisht I was in Ireland the livelong day;
Weary on the English hay, an' sorra take the wheat!
Och! Corrymeela, an' the blue sky over it.

There's a deep dumb river flowin' by beyont the heavy trees,
This livin' air is moithered wi' the hummin' o' the bees;
I wisht I'd hear the Claddagh burn go runnin' through the
heat,
Past Corrymeela, wi' the blue sky over it.

The people that's in England is richer nor the Jews,
There's not the smallest young gossoon but thravels in his
shoes!
I'd give the pipe between me teeth to see a barefut child,
Och! Corrymeela, an' the low south wind.

Here's hands so full o' money an' hearts so full o' care,
By the luck o' love! I'd still go light for all I did go bare.
"God save ye, colleen dhas," I said; the girl she thought me
wild!
Fair Corrymeela, an' the low south wind.

D'ye mind me now, the song at night is mortal hard to
raise,
The girls are heavy goin' here, the boys are ill to plase;
When ones't I'm out this workin' hive, 'tis I'll be back
again—
Aye, Corrymeela, in the same soft rain.

The puff o' smoke from one ould roof before an English town!

For a *shaugh* wid Andy Feelan here I'd give a silver crown,
For a curl o' hair like Mollie's ye'll ask the like in vain,
Sweet Corrymeela, an' the same soft rain.

MOIRA O'NEILL.

The Irish Peasant Girl

SHE lived beside the Anner,
At the foot of Slievna-man,
A gentle peasant girl,
With mild eyes like the dawn;
Her lips were dewy rosebuds;
Her teeth of pearls rare;
And a snow-drift 'neath a beechen bough
Her neck and nut-brown hair.

How pleasant 'twas to meet her
On Sunday, when the bell
Was filling with its mellow tones
Lone wood and grassy dell
And when at eve young maidens
Strayed the river bank along,
The widow's brown-haired daughter
Was loveliest of the throng.

O brave, brave Irish girls—
We well may call you brave!—
Sure the least of all your perils
Is the stormy ocean wave,
When you leave our quiet valleys,
And cross the Atlantic's foam,
To hoard your hard-won earnings
For the helpless ones at home.

“Write word to my own dear mother—
Say, we’ll meet with God above;
And tell my little brothers
I send them all my love;
May the angels ever guard them,
Is their dying sister’s prayer”—
And folded in a letter
Was a braid of nut-brown hair.

Ah, cold and well-nigh callous,
This weary heart has grown
For thy helpless fate, dear Ireland,
And for sorrows of my own;
Yet a tear my eye will moisten,
When by Anner side I stray,
For the lily of the mountain foot
That withered far away.

CHARLES JOSEPH KICKHAM.

The County of Mayo

ON THE deck of Patrick Lynch's boat I sat in woeful
plight,
Through my sighing all the weary day, and weeping all the
night,
Were it not that full of sorrow from my people forth I go,
By the blessed sun! 'tis royally I'd sing thy praise, Mayo!

When I dwelt at home in plenty, and my gold did much
abound,
In the company of fair young maids the Spanish ale went
round—
'Tis a bitter change from those gay days that now I'm forced
to go,
And must leave my bones in Santa Cruz, far from my own
Mayo.

They are altered girls in Irrul now; 'tis proud they're grown
and high,
With their hair-bags and their top-knots—for I pass their
buckles by;
But it's little now I heed their airs, for God will have it so,
That I must depart for foreign lands, and leave my sweet
Mayo.

Translated by GEORGE FOX.

PART V

SATIRES AND LAMENTS



On Himself

ON RAINY days alone I dine
Upon a chick and pint of wine.
On rainy days I dine alone
And pick my chicken to the bone;
But this my servants much enrages,
No scraps remain to save board-wages.
In weather fine I nothing spend,
But often sponge upon a friend;
Yet, where he's not so rich as I,
I pay my club, and so good-bye.

JONATHAN SWIFT.

On An Ill-Managed House

LET me thy properties explain :
A rotten cabin dropping rain :
Chimneys, with scorn rejecting smoke ;
Stools, tables, chairs, and bedsteads broke.
Here elements have lost their uses,
Air ripens not, nor earth produces :
In vain we make poor Sheelah toil,
Fire will not roast, nor water boil.
Through all the valleys, hills, and plains,
The Goddess Want, in triumph reigns :
And her chief officers of state,
Sloth, Dirt, and Theft, around her wait.

JONATHAN SWIFT.

On the World

WITH a whirl of thoughts oppress'd,
I sunk from reverie to rest.
A horrid vision seized my head,
I saw the graves give up their dead!
Jove, arm'd with terrors, bursts the skies,
And thunder roars and lightning flies!
Amazed, confused, its fate unknown,
The world stands trembling at his throne!
While each pale sinner hung his head,
Jove, nodding, shook the heavens, and said:
"Offending race of human kind,
By nature, reason, learning, blind;
You who, through frailty, stepp'd aside;
And you, who never fell from pride:
You who in different sects were shamm'd,
And come to see each other damn'd;
(So some folk told you, but they knew
No more of Jove's designs than you;)
—The world's mad business now is o'er,
And I resent these pranks no more.
—I to such blockheads set my wit!
I damn such fools!—Go, go, you're bit."

JONATHAN SWIFT.

Righteous Anger

THE lanky hank of a she in the inn over there
Nearly killed me for asking the loan of a glass of beer :
May the devil grip the whey-faced slut by the hair,
And beat bad manners out of her skin for a year.

That parboiled imp, with the hardest jaw you will see
On virtue's path, and a voice that would rasp the dead,
Came roaring and raging the minute she looked on me,
And threw me out of the house on the back of my head !

If I asked her master he'd give me a cask a day;
But she, with the beer at hand, not a gill would arrange !
May she marry a ghost and bear him a kitten, and may
The High King of Glory permit her to get the mange.

JAMES STEPHENS.

From the Irish of David O'Bruaidar.

*The Petition of Tom Dermody to the Three Fates
in Council Sitting*

RIGHT rigorous, and so forth! Humbled
By cares and mourning, tost and tumbled,
Before your Ladyships, Tom Fool,
Knowing above the rest you rule,
Most lamentably sets his case
With a bold heart and saucy face.
Sans shoes or stockings, coat or breeches,
You see him now, most mighty witches,
His body worn like an old farthing,
The angry spirit just a-parting,
His credit rotten, and his purse
As empty as a cobbler's curse;
His Poems, too, unsold—that's worse!
In short, between confounded crosses,
Patrons all vexed and former losses,
Sure as a gun he cannot fail,
Next week to warble in a jail,
Which jail to folks not very sanguine
Is just as good or worse than hanging;
Though in the first vain hopes flatter,
But Hope's quite strangled by the latter.
Thus is a poor rhyming rascal treated,
Fairly, or rather foully cheated
Of all the goods from wit accruing,
(Wit that's synonomous with ruin).
Then take it in your head-piece, Ladies,

To set up a poor Bard, whose trade is
Low fallen enough in conscience; pity
The maker of this magic ditty;
And turn your Wheel once more in haste
To see him on the summit placed,
For well you wot that woes ('od rot 'em)
Have long since stretched him at the bottom,
Where he who erst fine lyrics gabbled
With mire and filth was sorely dabbled,
So pitifully pelted, that
He looks like any drowned rat.
O Justice, Justice, take his part!
O lift him on thy lofty Cart
Magnific Fame! And let fat Plenty
Marry one Poet out of Twenty!

THOMAS DERMODY.

The Peeler and the Goat

A BANSHA Peeler wint won night
On duty and pathrollin' O,
An' met a goat upon the road,
And tuck her for a sthroller O.
Wud bay'net fixed he sallied forth,
An' caught her by the wizzen O,
An' then he swore a mighty oath,
"I'll send you off to prison O."

"Oh, mercy, sir!" the goat replied,
"Pray let me tell my story O!
I am no Rogue, no Ribbonman,
No Croppy, Whig, or Tory O;
I'm guilty not of any crime
Of petty or high thraison O,
I'm sadly wanted at this time,
For this is the milkin' saison O."

"It is in vain for to complain
Or give your tongue such bridle O,
You're absent from your dwellin' place,
Disorderly and idle O.
Your hoary locks will not prevail,
Nor your sublime oration O,
You'll be thransported by Peel's Act,
Upon my information O."

"No penal law did I transgress
By deeds or combination O.
I have no certain place to rest,
No home or habitation O.
But Bansha is my dwelling-place,
Where I was bred and born O,
Descended from an honest race,
That's all the trade I've learned O."

"I will chastise your insolence
And violent behaviour O;
Well bound to Cashel you'll be sint,
Where you will gain no favour O.
The magistrates will all consint
To sign your condemnation O;
From there to Cork you will be sint
For speedy thransportation O."

"This parish an' this neighbourhood
Are paiceable and thranquil O;
There's no disturbance here, thank God!
An' long may it continue so.
I don't regard your oath a pin,
Or sign for my committal O,
My jury will be gintlemin
And grant me my acquittal O."

"The consequence be what it will,
A peeler's power I'll let you know,
I'll handcuff you, at all events,
And march you off to Bridewell O.
An' sure, you rogue, you can't deny
Before the judge or jury O,
Intimidation with your horns,
An' threatening me with fury O."

"I make no doubt but you are dhrunk,
Wud whiskey, rum, or brandy O,
Or you wouldn't have such gallant spunk
To be so bould or manly O.
You readily would let me pass
If I had money handy O,
To thraté you to a potheen glass—
Oh! it's then I'd be the dandy O."

ANONYMOUS.

The Night Before Larry Was Stretched

THE night before Larry was stretched,
The boys they all paid him a visit;
A bait in their sacks, too, they fetched;
They sweated their duds till they riz it:
For Larry was ever the lad,
When a boy was condemned to the squeezer,
Would fence all the duds that he had
To help a poor friend to a sneezer,
And warm his gob 'fore he died.

The boys they came crowding in fast,
They drew all their stools round about him,
Six glims round his trap-case were placed,
He couldn't be well waked without 'em.
When one of us asked could he die
Without having truly repented,
Says Larry, "That's all in my eye;
And first by the clargy invented,
To get a fat bit for themselves."

"I'm sorry, dear Larry," says I,
"To see you in this situation;
And blister my limbs if I lie,
I'd as lieve it had been my own station."
"Ochone! it's all all over," says he,
"For the neck-cloth I'll be forced to put on,
And by this time to-morrow you'll see
Your poor Larry as dead as a mutton,
Because, why, his courage was good."

"And I'll be cut up like a pie,
And my nob from my body be parted.
"You're in the wrong box, then," says I,
"For blast me if they're so hard-hearted;
A chalk on the back of your neck
Is all that Jack Ketch dares to give you;
Then mind not such trifles a feck,
For why should the likes of them grieve you?
And now, boys, come tip us the deck."

The cards being called for, they played,
Till Larry found one of them cheated;
A dart at his napper he made
(The boy being easily heated);
"Oh, by the hokey, you thief,
I'll scuttle your nob with my daddle!
You cheat me because I'm in grief,
But soon I'll demolish your noddle,
And leave you your claret to drink."

Then the clergy came in with his book,
He spoke him so smooth and so civil;
Larry tipped him a Kilmainham look,
And pitched his big wig to the devil;
Then sighing, he threw back his head,
To get a sweet drop of the bottle,
And pitiful sighing, he said:
"Oh, the hemp will be soon round my throttle,
And choke my poor windpipe to death."

"Though sure it's the best way to die,
Oh, the devil a better a-living!
For, sure when the gallows is high
Your journey is shorter to heaven:
But what harasses Larry the most,
And makes his poor soul melancholy,
Is to think on the time when his ghost
Will come in a sheet to sweet Molly—
Oh, sure it will kill her alive!"

So moving these last words he spoke,
We all vented our tears in a shower;
For my part, I thought my heart broke,
To see him cut down like a flower.
On his travels we watched him next day,
Oh, the throttler! I thought I could kill him;
But Larry not one word did say,
Nor changed till he came to "King William"—
Then, musha! his color grew white.

When he came to the nubbling chit,
He was tucked up so neat and so pretty,
The rumbler jogged off from his feet,
And he died with his feet to the city;
He kicked, too—but that was all pride,
But soon you might see 'twas all over;
Soon after the noose was untied,
And at darky we waked him in clover,
And sent him to take a ground sweat.

ANONYMOUS.

See Note Page 350.

Bruadar and Smith and Glinn

BRUADAR and Smith and Glinn,
Amen, dear God, I pray,
May they lie low in waves of woe,
And tortures slow each day!
Amen!

Bruadar and Smith and Glinn
Helpless and cold, I pray,
Amen! I pray, O King,
To see them pine away.
Amen!

Bruadar and Smith and Glinn
May flails of sorrow flay!
Cause for lamenting, snares and cares
Be theirs by night and day!
Amen!

Blindness come down on Smith,
Palsy on Bruadar come,
Amen, O King of Brightness! Smite
Glenn in his members numb,
Amen!

Smith in the pangs of pain,
Stumbling on Bruadar's path,
King of the Elements, Oh, Amen!
Let loose on Glenn Thy Wrath.
Amen!

For Bruadar gape the grave,
Up-shovel for Smith the mould,
Amen, O King of the Sunday! Leave
Glinn in the devil's hold.

Amen!

Terrors on Bruadar rain,
And pain upon pain on Glinn,
Amen, O King of the Stars! And Smith
May the devil be linking him.

Amen!

Glinn in a shaking ague,
Cancer on Bruadar's tongue,
Amen, O King of the Heavens! and Smith
Forever stricken dumb.

Amen!

Thirst but no drink for Glinn,
Smith in a cloud of grief,
Amen! O King of the Saints; and rout
Bruadar without relief.

Amen!

Smith without child or heir,
And Bruadar bare of store,
Amen, O King of the Friday! Tear
For Glinn his black heart's core.

Amen!

Bruadar with nerveless limbs,
Hemp strangling Glinn's last breath,
Amen, O King of the World's Light!
And Smith in grips with death.

Amen!

Glinn stiffening for the tomb,
Smith wasting to decay,
Amen, O King of the Thunder's gloom,
And Bruadar sick alway.

Amen!

Smith like a sieve of holes,
Bruadar with throat decay,
Amen, O King of the Orders! Glinn
A buck-show every day.
Amen!

Hell-hounds to hunt for Smith,
Glenn led to hang on high,
Amen, O King of the Judgment Day!
And Bruadar rotting by.
Amen!

Curses on Glenn, I cry,
My curse on Bruadar be,
Amen, O King of the Heavens high!
Let Smith in bondage be.
Amen!

Showers of want and blame,
Reproach, and shame of face,
Smite them all three, and smite again,
Amen, O King of Grace!
Amen!

Melt, may the three, away,
Bruadar and Smith and Glenn,
Fall in a swift and sure decay
And lose, but never win.
Amen!

May pangs pass through thee, Smith,
(Let the wind not take my prayer),
May I see before the year is out
Thy heart's blood flowing there.
Amen!

Leave Smith no place nor land,
Let Bruadar wander wide,
May the Devil stand at Glenn's right hand,
And Glenn to him be tied.
Amen!

All ill from every airt
Come down upon the three,
And blast them ere the year be out
In rout and misery.
Amen!

Glinn let misfortune bruise,
Bruadar lose blood and brains,
Amen, O Jesus! hear my voice,
Let Smith be bent in chains.
Amen!

I accuse both Glinn and Bruadar,
And Smith I accuse to God,
May a breach and a gap be upon the three,
And the Lord's avenging rod.
Amen!

Each one of the wicked three
Who raised against me their hand,
May fire from heaven come down and slay
This day their perjured band,
Amen!

May none of their race survive,
May God destroy them all,
Each curse of the psalms in the holy books
Of the prophets upon them fall.
Amen!

Blight skull, and ear, and skin,
And hearing, and voice, and sight,
Amen! before the year be out,
Blight, Son of the Virgin, blight.
Amen!

May my curses hot and red
And all I have said this day,
Strike the Black Peeler, too,
Amen, dear God, I pray!
Amen!

Translated by DOUGLAS HYDE.

The Bard on the Bodach

(Who has denied him hospitality)

MAY a messenger come from the High Place of God
To bear up your soul to a throne—
But a robber be robbing him on the way back
And your fall be as dead as a stone.

May your tables be laden with jewels and gold
And your hands be upon it for proof—
When the devil whips in by your beggarly door
To tear your red soul through the roof.

SEUMAS O'KELLY.

A Curse on a Closed Gate

BE THIS the fate
Of the man who would shut his gate
On the stranger, gentle or simple, early or late.

When his mouth with a day's long hunger and thirst would
wish
For the savour of salted fish,
Let him sit and eat his fill of an empty dish.

To the man of that ilk,
Let water stand in his churn, instead of milk
That turns a calf's coat silk.

And under the gloomy night
May never a thatch made tight
Shut out the clouds from his sight.

Above the ground or below it,
Good cheer, may he never know it,
Nor a tale by the fire, nor a dance on the road, nor a song by a
wandering poet.

Till he open his gate
To the stranger, early or late,
And turn back the stone of his fate.

JAMES H. COUSINS
From the Irish.

O'Hussey's Ode to the Maguire

WHERE is my chief, my master, this bleak night, mavrone?
O cold, cold, miserably cold is this bleak night for Hugh!
Its showery, arrowy, speary sleet pierceth one thro' and thro',
Pierceth one to the very bone.

Rolls real thunder? Or was that red vivid light
Only a meteor? I scarce know; but through the midnight
dim
The pitiless ice-wind streams. Except the hate that perse-
cutes him,
Nothing hath crueler venomy might.

An awful, a tremendous night is this, meseems!
The flood-gates of the rivers of heaven, I think, have been
burst wide;
Down from the overcharged clouds, like to headlong ocean's
tide,
Descends grey rain in roaring streams.

Tho' he were even a wolf ranging the round green woods,
Tho' he were even a pleasant salmon in the unchainable sea,
Tho' he were a wild mountain eagle, he could scarce bear, he,
This sharp sore sleet, these howling floods.

O mournful is my soul this night for Hugh Maguire!
Darkly as in a dream he strays. Before him and behind
Triumphs the tyrannous anger of the wounding wind,
The wounding wind that burns as fire.

It is my bitter grief, it cuts me to the heart
That in the country of Clan Darry this should be his fate!
O woe is me, where is he? Wandering, houseless, desolate,
Alone, without or guide or chart!

Medreams I see just now his face, the strawberry-bright,
Uplifted to the blackened heavens, while the tempestuous
winds
Blow fiercely over and round him, and the smiting sleet-
shower blinds
The hero of Galang to-night!

Large, large affliction unto me and mine it is
That one of his majestic bearing, his fair stately form,
Should thus be tortured and o'erborne; that this unsparing
storm
Should wreak its wrath on head like his!

That his great hand, so oft the avenger of the oppressed,
Should this chill churlish night, perchance, be paralysed by
frost;
While through some icicle-hung thicket, as one lorn and lost,
He walks and wanders without rest.

The tempest-driven torrent deluges the mead,
It overflows the low banks of the rivulets and ponds;
The lawns and pasture-grounds lie locked in icy bonds,
So that the cattle cannot feed.

The pale-bright margins of the streams are seen by none;
Rushes and sweeps along the untamable flood on every side;
It penetrates and fills the cottagers' dwellings far and wide;
Water and land are blent in one.

Through some dark woods, 'mid bones of monsters, Hugh
now strays,
As he confronts the storm with anguished heart, but manly
brow,
O what a sword-wound to that tender heart of his, were now
A backward glance at peaceful days!

But other thoughts are his, thoughts that can still inspire
With joy and onward-bounding hope the bosom of MacNee;
Thoughts of his warriors charging like bright billows of the
 sea,
Borne on the wind's wings, flashing fire!

And tho' frost glaze to-night the clear dew of his eyes,
And white ice-gauntlets glove his noble fine fair fingers o'er,
A warm dress is to him that lightning-garb he ever wore,
The lightning of his soul, not skies.

Avran.

Hugh marched forth to fight: I grieved to see him so de-
 part.
And lo! to-night he wanders frozen, rain-drenched, sad be-
 trayed;
But the memory of the lime-white mansions his right hand
 hath laid
In ashes, warms the hero's heart!

Translated by JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

See Note Page 350.

A Lament for the Princes of Tyrone and Tyrconnel

O WOMAN of the piercing wail,
Who mournest o'er yon mound of clay
With sigh and groan,
Would God thou wert among the Gael!
Thou would'st not then from day to day
Weep thus alone.
'Twere long before around a grave
In green Tyrconnel, one could find
This loneliness;
Near where Beann-Boirche's banners wave,
Such grief as thine could ne'er have pined
Companionless.

Beside the wave in Donegal,
In Antrim's glens, or fair Dromore,
Or Killilee,
Or where the sunny waters fall
At Assaroe, near Erna shore,
This could not be.
On Derry's plains, in rich Drumcliff,
Throughout Armagh the Great, renowned
In olden years,
No day could pass but woman's grief
Would rain upon the burial-ground
Fresh floods of tears!

O no!—From Shannon, Boyne, and Suir,
From high Dunluce's castle-walls,
From Lissadill,

Would flock alike both rich and poor :
One wail would rise from Cruachan's halls
To Tara Hill ;
And some would come from Barrow-side,
And many a maid would leave her home
On Leitrim's plains,
And by melodious Banna's tide,
And by the Mourne and Erne, to come
And swell thy strains !

O, horses' hoofs would trample down
The mount whereon the martyr-saint
Was crucified ;
From glen and hill, from plain and town,
One loud lament, one thrilling plaint,
Would echo wide.
There would not soon be found, I ween,
One foot of ground among those bands
For museful thought,
So many shriekers of the keen
Would cry aloud, and clap their hands,
All woe-distraught !

Two princes of the line of Conn
Sleep in their cells of clay beside
O'Donnell Roe :
Three royal youths, alas ! are gone,
Who lived for Erin's weal, but died
For Erin's woe.
Ah, could the men of Ireland read
The names those noteless burial-stones
Display to view,
Their wounded hearts afresh would bleed,
Their tears gush forth again, their groans
Resound anew !

The youths whose relics moulder here
Were sprung from Hugh, high prince and lord
Of Aileach's lands;
Thy noble brothers, justly dear,
Thy nephew, long to be deplored
By Ulster's bands.
Theirs were not souls wherein dull time
Could domicile decay, or house
Decrepitude!
They passed from earth ere manhood's prime,
Ere years had power to dim their brows,
Or chill their blood.

And who can marvel o'er thy grief,
Or who can blame thy flowing tears,
Who knows their source?
O'Donnell, Dunnasava's chief,
Cut off amid his vernal years,
Lies here a corse
Beside his brother Cathbar, whom
Tyrconnell of the Helmets mourns
In deep despair:
For valour, truth, and comely bloom,
For all that greatens and adorns,
A peerless pair.

Oh, had these twain, and he, the third,
The Lord of Mourne, O'Niall's son
(Their mate in death),
A prince in look, in deed, and word,
Had these three heroes yielded on
The field their breath,
Oh, had they fallen on Criffan's plain,
There would not be a town or clan
From shore to sea,
But would with shrieks bewail the slain,
Or chant aloud the exulting rann
Of jubilee!

When high the shout of battle rose,
On fields where Freedom's torch still burned
Through Erin's gloom,
If one, if barely one of those
Were slain, all Ulster would have mourned
The hero's doom!
If at Athboy, where hosts of brave
Ulidian horsemen sank beneath
The shock of spears,
Young Hugh O'Neill had found a grave,
Long must the North have wept his death
With heart-wrung tears!

If on the day of Ballach-myre
The Lord of Mourne had met thus young,
A warrior's fate,
In vain would such as thou desire
To mourn, alone, the champion sprung
From Niall the Great!
No marvel this—for all the dead,
Heaped on the field, pile over pile,
At Mullach-brack,
Were scarce an eric for his head,
If death had stayed his footsteps while
On victory's track!

If on the Day of Hostages
The fruit had from the parent bough
Been rudely torn
In sight of Munster's bands—MacNee's—
Such blow the blood of Conn, I trow,
Could ill have borne.
If on the day of Ballach-boy
Some arm had laid by foul surprise,
The chieftain low,
Even our victorious shout of joy
Would soon give place to rueful cries
And groans of woe!

If on the day the Saxon host
Were forced to fly—a day so great
For Ashanee—
The Chief had been untimely lost,
Our conquering troops should moderate
Their mirthful glee.
There would not lack on Lifford's day,
From Galway, from the glens of Boyle,
From Limerick's towers,
A marshalled file, a long array
Of mourners to bedew the soil
With tears in showers!

If on the day a sterner fate
Compelled his flight from Athenree,
His blood had flowed,
What numbers all disconsolate,
Would come unasked, and share with thee
Affliction's load!
If Derry's crimson field had seen
His life-blood offered up, though 'twere
On Victory's shrine,
A thousand cries would swell the keen,
A thousand voices of despair
Would echo thine!

Oh, had the fierce Dalcassian swarm
That bloody night of Fergus' banks
But slain our Chief,
When rose his camp in wild alarm—
How would the triumph of his ranks
Be dashed with grief!
How would the troops of Murbach mourn
If on the Curlew Mountains' day
Which England rued,
Some Saxon hand had left them lorn,
By shedding there, amid the fray,
Their prince's blood!

Red would have been our warriors' eyes
Had Roderick found on Sligo's field
A gory grave,
No Northern Chief would soon arise
So sage to guide, so strong to shield,
So swift to save.
Long would Leith-Cuinn have wept if Hugh
Had met the death he oft had dealt
Among the foe;
But, had our Roderick fallen too,
All Erin must, alas! have felt
The deadly blow!

What do I say? Ah, woe is me!
Already we bewail in vain
Their fatal fall!
And Erin, once the great and free,
Now vainly mourns her breakless chain,
And iron thrall.
Then, daughter of O'Donnell, dry
Thine overflowing eyes, and turn
Thy heart aside,
For Adam's race is born to die,
And sternly the sepulchral urn
Mocks human pride.

Look not, nor sigh, for earthly throne,
Nor place thy trust in arm of clay,
But on thy knees
Uplift thy soul to God alone,
For all things go their destined way
As He decrees.
Embrace the faithful crucifix,
And seek the path of pain and prayer
Thy Saviour trod;
Nor let thy spirit intermix
With earthly hope, with worldly care,
Its groans to God!

And Thou, O mighty Lord! whose ways
Are far above our feeble minds
To understand,
Sustain us in these doleful days,
And render light the chain that binds
Our fallen land!

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN: *Translated from the Irish.*
See Note Page 351.

Lament for the Death of Eoghan Ruadh O'Neill

“**D**ID they dare, did they dare, to slay Eoghan Ruadh O'Neill?”

“Yes, they slew with poison him they feared to meet with steel.”

“May God wither up their hearts! May their blood cease to flow,

May they walk in living death, who poisoned Eoghan Ruadh.”

“Though it break my heart to hear, say again the bitter words.

From Derry, against Cromwell, he marched to measure swords:

But the weapon of the Sassanach met him on his way.

And he died at Cloch Uachtar, upon St. Leonard's day.

“Wail, wail ye for the Mighty One. Wail, wail ye for the Dead,

Quench the hearth, and hold the breath—with ashes strew the head.

How tenderly we loved him. How deeply we deplore!

Holy Saviour! but to think we shall never see him more!

“Sagest in the council was he, kindest in the hall,

Sure we never won a battle—'twas Eoghan won them all.

Had he lived—had he lived—our dear country had been free:

But he's dead, but he's dead, and 'tis slaves we'll ever be.

"O'Farrell and Clanricarde, Preston and Red Hugh,
Audley and MacMahon—ye valiant, wise and true:
But—what are ye all to our darling who is gone?
The Rudder of our Ship was he, our Castle's corner stone.

"Wail, wail him through the Island! Weep, weep for our
pride!
Would that on the battlefield our gallant chief had died!
Weep the Victor of Beinn Burb—weep him, young and old:
Weep for him, ye women—your beautiful lies cold!

"We thought you would not die—we were sure you would
not go,
And leave us in our utmost need to Cromwell's cruel blow—
Sheep without a shepherd, when the snow shuts out the
sky—
O! why did you leave us, Eoghan? Why did you die?

"Soft as woman's was your voice, O'Neill! bright was your
eye,
O! why did you leave us, Eoghan? Why did you die?
Your troubles are all over, you're at rest with God on high,
But we're slaves, and we're orphans, Eoghan!—why did you
die?"

THOMAS DAVIS.

See Note Page 351.

Dirge on the Death of Art O'Leary

By Dark Eileen, his wife

I

MY CLOSEST and dearest!
From the first day I saw you
From the top of the market-house,
My eyes gave heed to you,
My heart gave affection to you,
I fled from my friends with you,
Far from my home with you,
No lasting sorrow this to me.

II

Thou didst bring me to fair chambers,
Rooms you had adorned for me;
Ovens were reddened for me,
Fresh trout were caught for me,
Roast flesh was carved for me
From beef that was felled for me;
On beds of down I lay
Till the coming of the milking-time,
Or so long as was pleasing to me.

III

Rider of the white palm!
 With the silver-hilted sword!
 Well your beaver hat became you
 With its band of graceful gold;
 Your suit of solid homespun yarn
 Wrapped close around your form;
 Slender shoes of foreign fashion,
 And a pin of brightest silver
 Fastened in your shirt.
 As you rode in stately wise
 On your slender steed, white-faced,
 After coming over seas,
 Even the Saxons bowed before you
 Bowed down to the very ground;
 Not because they loved you well
 But from deadly hate;
 For it was by them you fell,
 Darling of my soul.

IV

My friend and my little calf!
 Offsprings of the Lords of Antrim,
 And the chiefs of Immokely!
 Never had I thought you dead,
 Until there came to me your mare
 Her bridle dragged beside her to the ground;
 Upon her brow your heart-blood splashed,
 Even to the carven saddle flowing down
 Where you were wont to sit or stand.
 I did not stay to cleanse it—
 I gave a quick leap with my hands
 Upon the wooden stretcher of the bed:
 A second leap was to the gate,
 And the third leap upon thy mare.

In haste I clapped my hands together,
 I followed on your tracks
 As well as I could,
 Till I found you laid before me dead
 At the foot of a lowly bush of furze;
 Without pope, without bishop,
 Without cleric or priest
 To read a psalm for thee;
 But only an old bent wasted crone
 Who flung over thee the corner of her cloak.

VI

My dear and beloved one!
 When it will come to me to reach our home,
 Little Conor, of our love,
 And Fiac, his toddling baby-brother,
 Will be asking of me quickly
 Where I left their dearest father?
 I shall answer them with sorrow
 That I left him in Kill Martyr;
 They will call upon their father;
 He will not be there to answer.

VII

My love and my chosen one!
 When you were going forward from the gate,
 You turned quickly back again!
 You kissed your two children,
 You threw a kiss to me.
 You said, "Eileen, arise now, be stirring,
 And set your house in order,
 Be swiftly moving.
 I am leaving our home,
 It is likely that I may not come again."
 I took it only for a jest
 You used often to be jesting thus before.

VIII

My friend and my heart's love!
 Arise up, my Art,
 Leap on thy steed,
 Arise out to Macroon
 And to Inchegeela after that;
 A bottle of wine in thy grasp,
 As was ever in the time of thy ancestors.
 Arise up, my Art,
 Rider of the shining sword;
 Put on your garments,
 Your fair noble clothes;
 Don your black beaver,
 Draw on your gloves;
 See, here hangs your whip,
 Your good mare waits without;
 Strike eastward on the narrow road,
 For the bushes will bare themselves before you,
 For the streams will narrow on your path,
 For men and women will bow themselves before you
 If their own good manners are upon them yet,
 But I am much a-feared they are not now.

IX

Destruction to you and woe,
 O Morris, hideous the treachery
 That took from me the man of the house,
 The father of my babes;
 Two of them running about the house,
 The third beneath my breast,
 It is likely that I shall not give it birth.

My long wound, my bitter sorrow,
 That I was not beside thee
 When the shot was fired;
 That I might have got it in my soft body
 Or in the skirt of my gown;
 Till I would give you freedom to escape,
 O Rider of the grey eye,
 Because it is you would best have followed after
 them.

My dear and my heart's love!
 Terrible to me the way I see thee,
 To be putting our hero,
 Our rider so true of heart,
 In a little cap in a coffin!
 Thou who used to be fishing along the streams,
 Thou who didst drink within wide halls
 Among the gentle women white of breast;
 It is my thousand afflictions
 That I have lost your companionship!
 My love and my darling,
 Could my shouts but reach thee
 West in mighty Derrynane,
 And in Carhen of the yellow apples after that;
 Many a light-hearted young horseman,
 And woman with white, spotless kerchief
 Would swiftly be with us here,
 To wail above thy head
 Art O'Leary of the joyous laugh!
 O women of the soft, wet eyes,
 Stay now your weeping,
 Till Art O'Leary drinks his drink
 Before his going back to school;
 Not to learn reading or music does he go there now,
 But to carry clay and stones.

My love and my secret thou.
 Thy corn-stacks are piled,
 And thy golden kine are milking,
 But it is upon my own heart is the grief!
 There is no healing in the Province of Munster,
 Nor in the Island smithy of the Fians,
 Till Art O'Leary will come back to me;
 But all as if it were a lock upon a trunk
 And the key of it gone straying;
 Or till rust will come upon the screw.

XIII

My friend and my best one!
 Art O'Leary, son of Conor,
 Son of Cadach, son of Lewis,
 Eastward from wet wooded glens,
 Westward from the slender hill
 Where the rowan-berries grow,
 And the yellow nuts are ripe upon the branches;
 Apples trailing, as it was in my day.
 Little wonder to myself
 If fires were lighted in O'Leary's country,
 And at the mouth of Ballingearry,
 Or at holy Gougane Barra of the cells,
 After the rider of the smooth grip,
 After the huntsman unwearied
 When, heavy breathing with the chase,
 Even thy lithe deerhounds lagged behind.
 O horseman of the enticing eyes,
 What happened thee last night?
 For I myself thought
 That the whole world could not kill you
 When I bought for you that shirt of mail.

XIV

My friend and my darling!
 A cloudy vision through the darkness
 Came to me last night,
 At Cork lately
 And I alone upon my bed!
 I saw the wooded glen withered,
 I saw our lime-washed court fallen;
 No sound of speech came from thy hunting-dogs
 Nor sound of singing from the birds
 When you were found in the clay,
 On the side of the hill without;
 When you were found fallen
 Art O'Leary;
 With your drop of blood oozing out
 Through the breast of your shirt.

XV

It is known to Jesus Christ,
 I will put no cap upon thy head,
 Nor body-linen on my side,
 Nor shoes upon my feet,
 Nor gear throughout the house;
 Even on the brown mare will be no bridle,
 But I shall spend all in taking the law.
 I will go across the seas
 To seek the villain of the black blood
 But if they will give no heed to me,
 It is I that will come back again
 To speak with the King;
 Who cut off my treasure from me.
 O Morris, who killed my hero,
 Was there not one man in Erin
 Would put a bullet through you?

The affection of this heart to you,
O white women of the mill,
For the edged poetry that you have shed
Over the horseman of the brown mare.
It is I who am the lonely one
In Inse Carriganane.

Translated by ELEANOR HULL.

See Note Page 352.

The Lament for O'Sullivan Beare

(Made by His Nurse)

THE sun of Ivera
No longer shines brightly,
The voice of her music
No longer is sprightly;
No more to her maidens
The light dance is dear,
Since the death of our darling
O'Sullivan Beare.

Scully! thou false one
You basely betrayed him;
In his strong hour of need
When thy right hand should aid him;
He fed thee—he clad thee—
You had all could delight thee:
You left him, you sold him
May heaven requite thee!

Scully! May all kinds
Of evil attend thee!
On thy dark road of life
May no kind one befriend thee!
May fevers long burn thee.
And agues long freeze thee!
May the strong hand of God
In his red anger seize thee!

Had he died calmly
I would not deplore him;
Or if the wild strife
Of the sea-war closed o'er him:
But with ropes round his white limbs
Through Ocean to trail him,
Like a fish after slaughter
'Tis therefore I wail him.

Long may the curse
Of his people pursue them;
Scully that sold him
And soldier that slew him!
One glimpse of Heaven's light
May they see never!
May the hearthstone of Hell
Be their best bed forever!

In the hole where the vile hands
Of soldiers had laid thee,
Unhonored, unshrouded,
And headless they laid thee,
No eye to rain o'er thee,
No dirge to lament thee,
No friend to deplore thee!

Dear head of my darling
How gory and pale
These aged eyes see thee,
High spiked on their jail!
That cheek in the summer sun
Ne'er shall grow warm;
Nor that eye e'er catch light
From the flash of the storm!

A curse, blessed ocean,
Is on thy green water
From the Haven of Cork
To Ivera of slaughter:
Since the billows were dyed
With the red wounds of fear
Of Muirtach Og
Our O'Sullivan Beare!

Translated by JEREMIAH JOSEPH CALLANAN.

A Connacht Caoine

DRAW near to the tables, ye that wear the cloaks;
Here ye have flesh, but it is not roast flesh,
Nor boiled in pots, nor cooked for feasting,
But my dear Bourke—och, och. after been slain.

You, young women, who are drinking wine there,
Let my sharp screeches pierce your heart.
If I am wise I may get whatever is my lot,
But you will never—och, och. och—get another brother!

O young woman, don't you pity my sorrow?
My mourning over the bier of my spouse?
A lock of his hair is within my purse,
And his offspring—och, och—hidden within me!
From the Irish.

The Convict of Clonmala

HOW hard is my fortune,
And vain my repining!
The strong rope of fate
For this young neck is twining.
My strength is departed,
My cheek sunk and sallow,
While I languish in chains
In the gaol of Clonmala.

No boy in the village
Was ever yet milder;
I'd play with a child
And my sport would be wilder;
I'd dance without tiring
From morning till even,
And the goal-ball I'd strike
To the lightning of heaven.
At my bed-foot decaying,
My hurl-ball is lying;

Through the boys of the village
My goal-ball is flying;
My horse 'mong the neighbors
Neglected may fallow,
While I pine in my chains
In the gaol of Clonmala.

Next Sunday the pattern
At home will be keeping,
And the young active hurlers
The field will be sweeping;
With the dance of fair maidens
The evening they'll hallow,
While this heart, once so gay,
Shall be cold in Clonmala.
Translated by JEREMIAH JOSEPH CALLANAN.

A Woman of the Mountain Keens Her Son

GRIEF on the death, it has blackened my heart:

It has snatched my love and left me desolate,
Without friend or companion under the roof of my house
But this sorrow in the midst of me, and I keening.

As I walked the mountain in the evening
The birds spoke to me sorrowfully,
The sweet snipe spoke and the voiceless curlew
Relating to me that my darling was dead.

I called to you and your voice I heard not,
I called again and I got no answer,
I kissed your mouth, and O God how cold it was!
Ah, cold is your bed in the lonely churchyard.

O green-sodded grave in which my child is,
Little narrow grave, since you are his bed,
My blessing on you, and thousands of blessings
On the green sods that are over my treasure.

Grief on the death, it cannot be denied,
It lays low, green and withered together,—
And O gentle little son, what tortures me is
That your fair body should be making clay!

Translated from the Irish of PADRAIC PEARSE.

Aghadoe

THERE'S a glade in Aghadoe, Aghadoe, Aghadoe,
There's a green and silent glade in Aghadoe,
Where we met, my Love and I, Love's fair planet in the
sky,
O'er that sweet and silent glade in Aghadoe.

There's a glen in Aghadoe, Aghadoe, Aghadoe,
There's a deep and secret glen in Aghadoe,
Where I hid him from the eyes of the red-coats and their
spies
That year the trouble came to Aghadoe.

Oh! my curse on one black heart in Aghadoe, Aghadoe,
On Shaun Dhuv, my mother's son in Aghadoe,
When your throat fries in hell's drouth salt the flame be in
your mouth,
For the treachery you did in Aghadoe!

For they tracked me to that glen in Aghadoe, Aghadoe,
When the price was on his head in Aghadoe;
O'er the mountain through the wood, as I stole to him
with food,
When in hiding lone he lay in Aghadoe.

But they never took him living in Aghadoe, Aghadoe;
With the bullets in his heart in Aghadoe,
There he lay, the head—my breast keeps the warmth where
once 'twould rest—
Gone, to win the traitor's gold from Aghadoe!

I walked to Mallow Town from Aghadoe, Aghadoe,
Brought his head from the gaol's gate to Aghadoe,

Then I covered him with fern, and I piled on him the
cairn,
Like an Irish king he sleeps in Aghadoe.

Oh, to creep into that cairn in Aghadoe, Aghadoe!
There to rest upon his breast in Aghadoe!

Sure your dog for you could die with no truer heart than
I—
Your own love cold on your cairn in Aghadoe.

JOHN TODHUNTER.

The Burial of Sir John Moore

NOT a drum was heard, not a funeral note,
As his corse to the rampart we hurried;
Not a soldier discharged his farewell shot
O'er the grave where our hero we buried.

We buried him darkly at dead of night,
The sods with our bayonets turning,
By the struggling moonbeam's misty light,
And the lantern dimly burning.

No useless coffin enclosed his breast,
Not in sheet or in shroud we wound him;
But he lay like a warrior taking his rest,
With his martial cloak around him.

Few and short were the prayers we said,
And we spoke not a word of sorrow;
But we steadfastly gazed on the face that was dead,
And we bitterly thought of the morrow.

We thought as we hollow'd his narrow bed,
And smooth'd down his lonely pillow,
That the foe and the stranger would tread o'er his
head,
And we far away on the billow!

Lightly they'll talk of the spirit that's gone,
And o'er his cold ashes upbraid him,
But little he'll reckon, if they let him sleep on
In the grave where a Briton has laid him.

But half of our heavy task was done,
When the clock struck the hour for retiring;
And we heard the distant and random gun
That the foe was sullenly firing.

Slowly and sadly we laid him down,
From the field of his fame fresh and gory;
We carved not a line, and we raised not a stone—
But we left him alone in his glory!

CHARLES WOLFE.

Lament for Thomas Davis

I WALKED through Ballinderry in the spring-time,
When the bud was on the tree;
And I said, in every fresh-ploughed field beholding
The sowers striding free,
Scattering broadside forth the corn in golden plenty
On the quick seed-clasping soil,
"Even such this day, among the fresh-stirred hearts of Erin,
Thomas Davis, is thy toil."

I sat by Ballyshannon in the summer,
And saw the salmon leap;
And I said, as I beheld the gallant creatures
Spring glittering from the deep,
Through the spray, and through the prone heaps striving
onward
To the calm, clear streams above,
"So seekest thou thy native founts of freedom, Thomas
Davis,
In thy brightness of strength and love."

I stood in Derrybawn in the autumn,
And I heard the eagle call,
With a clangorous cry of wrath and lamentation
That filled the wide mountain hall,
O'er the bare, deserted place of his plundered eyrie;
And I said, as he screamed and soared,
"So callest thou, thou wrathful, soaring Thomas Davis,
For a nation's rights restored!"

And, alas! to think but now, and thou art lying,
Dear Davis, dead at thy mother's knee;
And I, no mother near, on my own sick-bed,
That face on earth shall never see;
I may lie and try to feel that I am dreaming,
I may lie and try to say, "Thy will be done,"
But a hundred such as I will never comfort Erin
For the loss of the noble son!

Young husbandman of Erin's fruitful seed-time,
In the fresh track of danger's plough!
Who will walk the heavy, toilsome, perilous furrow,
Girt with freedom's seed-sheets, now?
Who will banish with the wholesome crop of knowledge
The daunting weed and the bitter thorn,
Now that thou thyself art but a seed for hopeful planting
Against the Resurrection morn?

Young salmon of the flood-tide of freedom
That swells round Erin's shore!
Thou wilt leap against their loud oppressive torrent
Of bigotry and hate no more;
Drawn downward by their prone material instinct,
Let them thunder on their rocks and foam—
Thou hast leapt, aspiring soul, to founts beyond their raging,
Where troubled waters never come!

But I grieve not, Eagle of the empty eyrie,
That thy wrathful cry is still;
And that the songs alone of peaceful mourners
Are heard to-day on Earth's hill;
Better far, if brothers' war be destined for us
(God avert that horrid day I pray),
That ere our hands be stained with slaughter fratricidal,
Thy warm heart should be cold in clay.

But my trust is strong in God, Who made us brothers,
That He will not suffer their right hands,
Which thou hast joined in holier rites than wedlock
To draw opposing brands.
Oh, many a tuneful tongue that thou madest vocal
Would lie cold and silent then;
And songless long once more, should often-widowed Erin
Mourn the loss of her brave young men.

Oh, brave young men, my love, my pride, my promise,
'Tis on you my hopes are set,
In manliness, in kindliness, in justice,
To make Erin a nation yet;
Self-respecting, self-relying, self-advancing—
In union or in severance, free and strong—
And if God grant this, then, under God, to Thomas Davis
Let the greater praise belong.

SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON.

See Note Page 352.

Parnell

TEARS will betray all pride, but when ye mourn him,
Be it in soldier wise;
As for a captain who hath greatly borne him,
And in the midnight dies.

Fewness of words is best; he was too great
For ours or any phrase.
Love could not guess, nor the slipped hound of hate
Track his soul's secret ways.

Signed with a sign, unbroken, unrevealed,
His Calvary he trod;
So let him keep, where all world-wounds are healed
The silences of God.

Yet is he Ireland's, too: a flaming coal
Lit at the stars, and sent
To burn the sin of patience from her soul
The scandal of content.

A name to be a trumpet of attack;
And, in the evil stress,
For England's iron No! to fling her back
A grim, granatic Yes.

He taught us more, this best as it was last:
When comrades go apart
They shall go greatly, cancelling the past,
Slaying the kindlier heart.

Friendship and love, all clean things and unclean,
Shall be as drifted leaves,
Spurned by our Ireland's feet, that queenliest Queen
Who gives not, but receives.

So freedom comes, and comes no other wise;
He gave—"The Chief" gave well;
Limned in his blood across your clearing skies
Look up and read: Parnell!

THOMAS KETTLE.

Synge's Grave

MY grief! that they have laid you in the town
Within the moidher of its thousand wheels
And busy feet that travel up and down.

They had a right to choose a better bed
Far off among the hills where silence steals
In on the soul with comfort-bringing tread.

The curlew would have keened for you all day,
The wind across the heather cried Ochone
For sorrow of his brother gone away.

In Glenmalure, far off from town-bred men,
Why would they not have left your sleep alone
At peace there in the shadow of the glen?

To tend your grave you should have had the sun,
The fraughan and the moss, the heather brown
And gorse turned gold for joy of Spring begun.

You should have had your brothers, wind and rain,
And in the dark the stars all looking down
To ask, "When will he take the road again?"

The herdsmen of the lone back hills, that drive
The mountain ewes to some far distant fair,
Would stand and say, "We knew him well alive,

That God may rest his soul!" then they would pass
Into the silence brooding everywhere,
And leave you to your sleep below the grass.

But now among these alien city graves,
What way are you without the rough wind's breath
You free-born son of mountains and wild waves?

Ah! God knows better—here you've no abode,
So long ago you had the laugh at death,
And rose and took the windswept mountain road.

WINIFRED LETTS.

To a Dead Poet

I SPEAK your name—a magic thing—
Jocund April takes my hand,
Golden birds begin to sing,
Laughter fills the silver land.

I speak your name—a Matin bell—
Buoyant, godlike, you arise—
Flinging far the slumber-spell
Laid upon your heart and eyes.

I speak your name—and Summer's here—
Glad beyond all Summers gone—
And you are shining like the spear
God fashioned in His first day's dawn.

ELEANOR ROGERS COX.

The Dead Aviator

SO ENDLESSLY the gray-lipped sea
Kept me within his eye,
And lean he licked his hollow flanks
And followed up the sky.

I was the lark whose song was heard
When I was lost to sight,
I was the golden arrow loosed
To pierce the heart of night.

I fled the little earth, I climbed
Above the rising sun,
I met the morning in a blaze
Before my hour was gone.

I ran beyond the rim of space,
Its reins I flung aside,
Laughter was mine and mine was youth
And all my own was pride.

From end to end I knew the way
I had no doubt nor fear
The minutes were a forfeit paid
To fetch the landfall near.

But all at once my heart I held,
My carol frozen died,
A white cloud laid her cheek to mine
And wove me to her side.

Her icy fingers clasped my flesh,
Her hair drooped in my face,
And up we fell and down we rose
And twisted into space.

Laughter was mine and mine was youth,
I pressed the edge of life,
I kissed the sun and raced the wind,
I found immortal strife.

Out of myself I spent myself,
I lost the mortal share,
My grave is in the ashen plain,
My spirit in the air.

Good-bye, sweet pride of man that flew,
Sweet pain of man that bled,
I was the lark that spilled his heart,
The golden arrow sped.

*So endlessly the gray-lipped sea
Kept me within his eye
And lean he licked his hollow flanks
And followed up the sky.*

FRANCIS HACKETT.

Lament for Sean MacDermott

THEY have slain you, Sean MacDermott; never more these
eyes will greet

The eyes beloved by women, and the smile that true men
loved;

Never more I'll hear the stick-tap, and the gay and limping
feet,

They have slain you, Sean the gentle, Sean the valiant, Sean
the proved.

Have you scorn for us who linger here behind you, Sean the
wise?

As you look about and greet your comrades in the strange
new dawn.

So one says, but saying, wrongs you, for doubt never dimmed
your eyes,

And not death itself could make those lips of yours grow
bitter, Sean.

As your stick goes tapping down the heavenly pavement,
Sean, my friend,

That is not your way of thinking, generous, tender, wise and
brave;

We, who knew and loved and trusted you, are trusted to the
end,

And your hand even now grips mine as though there never
were a grave.

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN.

Lament for Thomas MacDonagh

HE SHALL not hear the bittern cry
In the wild sky, where he is lain,
Nor voices of the sweeter birds
Above the wailing of the rain.

Nor shall he know when loud March blows
Thro' slanting snows her fanfare shrill,
Blowing to flame the golden cup
Of many an upset daffodil.

But when the Dark Cow leaves the moor,
And pastures poor with greedy weeds,
Perhaps he'll hear her low at morn,
Lifting her horn in pleasant meads.

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE.

Lament for the Poets: 1916

I HEARD the Poor Old Woman say:
"At break of day the fowler came,
And took my blackbirds from their songs
Who loved me well thro' shame and blame.

No more from lovely distances
Their songs shall bless me mile by mile,
Nor to white Ashbourne call me down
To wear my crown another while.

With bended flowers the angels mark
For the skylark the place they lie,
From there its little family
Shall dip their wings first in the sky.

And when the first surprise of flight
Sweet songs excite, from the far dawn
Shall there come blackbirds loud with love,
Sweet echoes of the singers gone.

But in the lonely hush of eve
Weeping I grieve the silent bills."
I heard the Poor Old Woman say
In Derry of the little hills.

FRANCIS LEDWIDGE.

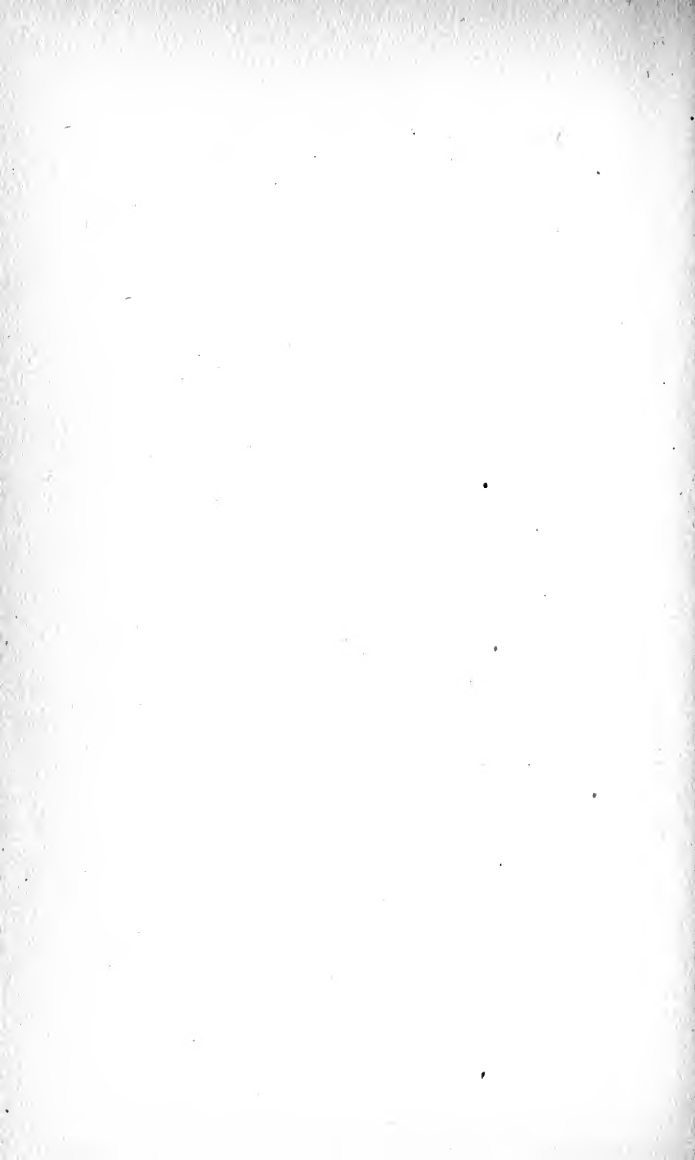
How Oft Has the Banshee Cried

HOW oft has the Banshee cried!
How oft has death untied
Bright links that Glory wove,
Sweet bonds entwined by Love!
Peace to each manly soul that sleepeth;
Rest to each faithful eye that weepeth;
Long may the fair and brave
Sigh o'er the hero's grave!

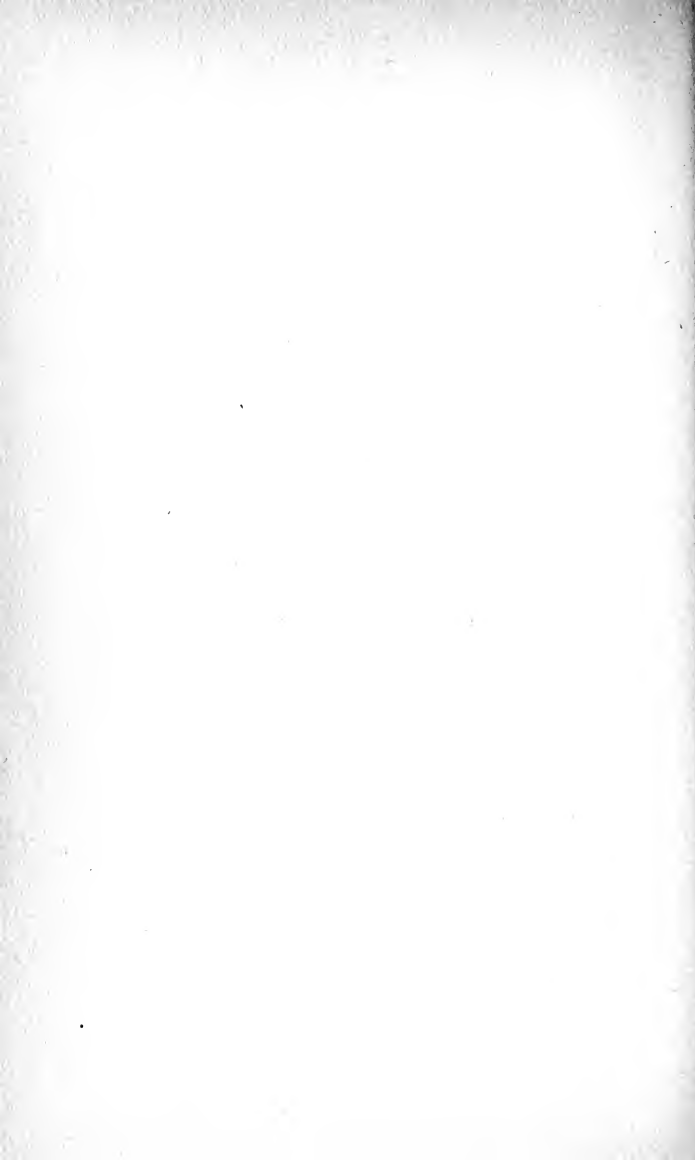
We're fallen on evil days!
Star after star decays,
Every bright name that shed
Light o'er the land is fled.
Dark falls the tear of him that mourneth
Lost joy, or hope that ne'er returneth:
But brightly flows the tear
Wept o'er a hero's bier.

Quenched are our beacon lights—
Thou, of the Hundred Fights!
Thou, on whose burning tongue
Truth, peace and freedom hung!
Both mute—but long as valor shineth,
Or mercy's soul at war repineth,
So long shall Erin's pride
Tell how they lived and died.

THOMAS MOORE.



PART VI
OUR HERITAGE



The Downfall of the Gael

MY HEART is in woe,
And my soul deep in trouble,—
For the mighty are low,
And abased are the noble:

The Sons of the Gael
Are in exile and mourning,
Worn, weary, and pale
As spent pilgrims returning;

Or men who, in flight
From the field of disaster,
Beseech the black night
On their flight to fall faster;

Or seamen aghast
When their planks gape asunder,
And the waves fierce and fast
Tumble through in hoarse thunder;

Or men whom we see
That have got their death-omen,—
Such wretches are we
In the chains of our foemen!

Our courage is, fear,
Our nobility vileness,
Our hope is despair,
And our comeliness foulness.

There is mist on our heads,
And a cloud chill and hoary
Of black sorrow, sheds
An eclipse on our glory.

From Boyne to the Linn
Has the mandate been given,
That the children of Finn
From their country be driven.

That the sons of the king—
Oh, the treason and malice!—
Shall no more ride the ring
In their own native valleys;

No more shall repair
Where the hill foxes tarry,
Nor forth to the air
Fling the hawk at her quarry:

For the plain shall be broke
By the share of the stranger,
And the stone-mason's stroke
Tell the woods of their danger;

The green hills and shore
Be with white keeps disfigured,
And the Mote of Rathmore
Be the Saxon churl's haggard!

The land of the lakes
Shall no more know the prospect
Of valleys and brakes—
So transformed is her aspect!

The Gael cannot tell,
In the uprooted wildwood
And the red ridgy dell,
The old nurse of his childhood:

The nurse of his youth
Is in doubt as she views him,
If the wan wretch, in truth,
Be the child of her bosom.

We starve by the board,
And we thirst amid wassail—
For the guest is the lord,
And the host is the vassal!

Through the woods let us roam,
Through the wastes wild and barren;
We are strangers at home!
We are exiles in Erin!

And Erin's a bark
O'er the wide waters driven!
And the tempest howls dark,
And her side planks are riven!

And in billows of might
Swell the Saxon before her,—
Unite, oh, unite!
Or the billows burst o'er her!

Translated by SIR SAMUEL FERGUSON.

See Note Page 352.

Lament for Banba

O MY land! O my love!
What a woe, and how deep,
Is thy death to my long mourning soul!
God alone, God above,
Can awake thee from sleep,
Can release thee from bondage and dole!
Alas, alas, and alas!
For the once proud people of Banba!

As a tree in its prime,
Which the axe layeth low,
Didst thou fall, O unfortunate land!
Not by time, nor thy crime,
Came the shock and the blow.
They were given by a false felon hand!
Alas, alas, and alas!
For the once proud people of Banba!

O, my grief of all griefs
Is to see how thy throne
Is usurped, whilst thyself art in thrall!
Other lands have their chiefs,
Have their kings, thou alone
Art a wife, yet a widow withal!
Alas, alas, and alas!
For the once proud people of Banba!

The high house of O'Neill
Is gone down to the dust,
The O'Brien is clanless and banned;
And the steel, the red steel
May no more be the trust
Of the Faithful and Brave in the land!
Alas, alas, and alas!
For the once proud people of Banba!

True, alas! Wrong and Wrath
Were of old all too rife.
Deeds were done which no good man admires
And perchance Heaven hath
Chastened us for the strife
And the blood-shedding ways of our sires!
Alas, alas, and alas!
For the once proud people of Banba!

But, no more! This our doom,
While our hearts yet are warm,
Let us not over weakly deplore!
For the hour soon may loom
When the Lord's mighty hand
Shall be raised for our rescue once more!
And all our grief shall be turned into joy
For the still proud people of Banba!
Translated by JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

See Note Page 352.

Tara Is Grass

THE world hath conquered, the wind hath scattered like
dust

Alexander, Cæsar, and all that shared their sway:

Tara is grass, and behold how Troy lieth low—

And even the English, perchance their hour will come!

Translated by PADRAIC PEARSE.

Kathleen-Ni-Houlahan

LONG they pine in weary woe, the nobles of our land,
Long they wander to and fro, proscribed, alas! and
banned;
Feastless, houseless, altarless, they bear the exile's brand,
But their hope is in the coming-to of Kathleen-Ni-Houla-
han!

Think her not a ghastly hag, too hideous to be seen,
Call her not unseemly names, our matchless Kathleen;
Young is she, and fair she is, and would be crowned a queen,
Were the King's son at home here with Kathleen-Ni-
Houlahan!

Sweet and mild would look her face, O none so sweet and
mild,
Could she crush her foes by whom her beauty is reviled;
Woollen plaids would grace herself and robes of silk her
child,
If the King's son were living here with Kathleen-Ni-
Houlahan!

Sore disgrace it is to see the Arbitress of Thrones
Vassal to a *Saxoneen* of cold and sapless bones!
Bitter anguish wrings our souls—with heavy sighs and groans
We wait the Young Deliverer of Kathleen-Ni-Houlahan!

Let us pray to Him who holds Life's issues in his hands—
Him who formed the mighty globe, with all its thousand
lands;
Girding them with seas and mountains, rivers deep, and
strands,
To cast a look of pity upon Kathleen-Ni-Houlahan!

He, who over sands and waves led Israel along—
He, who fed, with heavenly bread, that chosen tribe and
throng—
He, who stood by Moses, when his foes were fierce and
strong—
May He show forth His might in saving Kathleen-Ni-
Houlahan.

Translated by JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

Dark Rosaleen

O MY dark Rosaleen,
Do not sigh, do not weep!
The priests are on the ocean green,
They march along the deep.
There's wine from the royal Pope,
Upon the ocean green;
And Spanish ale shall give you hope,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
Shall glad your heart, shall give you hope,
Shall give you health and help, and hope,
My Dark Rosaleen.

Over hills, and through dales,
Have I roamed for your sake;
All yesterday I sailed with sails
On river and on lake.
The Erne, at its highest flood,
I dashed across unseen,
For there was lightning in my blood,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
Oh! there was lightning in my blood,
Red lightning lightened through my blood,
My Dark Rosaleen!

All day long in unrest,
To and fro do I move,
The very soul within my breast
Is wasted for you, love!
The heart in my bosom faints
To think of you, my Queen,
My life of life, my saint of saints,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
To hear your sweet and sad complaints,
My life, my love, my saint of saints,
My Dark Rosaleen!

Woe and pain, pain and woe,
Are my lot, night and noon,
To see your bright face clouded so,
Like to the mournful moon.
But yet will I rear your throne
Again in golden sheen;
'Tis you shall reign, shall reign alone,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
'Tis you shall have the golden throne,
'Tis you shall reign, shall reign alone,
My Dark Rosaleen!

Over dews, over sands,
Will I fly for your weal:
Your holy, delicate white hands
Shall girdle me with steel.
At home in your emerald bowers,
From morning's dawn till e'en,
You'll pray for me, my flower of flowers,
My dark Rosaleen!
My fond Rosaleen!
You'll think of me through daylight's hours,
My virgin flower, my flower of flowers,
My Dark Rosaleen!

I could scale the blue air,
I could plough the high hills,
Oh, I could kneel all night in prayer,
To heal your many ills!
And one beamy smile from you
Would float like light between
My toils and me, my own, my true,
My dark Rosaleen!
My fond Rosaleen!
Would give me life and soul anew,
A second life, a soul anew,
My Dark Rosaleen!

O! the Erne shall run red
With redundance of blood,
The earth shall rock beneath our tread,
And flames wrap hill and wood,
And gun-peal, and slogan cry
Wake many a glen serene,
Ere you shall fade, ere you shall die,
My dark Rosaleen!
My own Rosaleen!
The Judgment Hour must first be nigh
Ere you can fade, ere you can die,
My Dark Rosaleen!

Translated by JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

See Note Page 353.

Roisin Dubh

O WHO are thou with that queenly brow
And uncrowned head?
And why is the vest that binds thy breast,
O'er the heart, blood-red?
Like a rose-bud in June that spot at noon,
A rose-bud weak;
But it deepens and grows like a July rose:
Death-pale thy cheek.

"The babes I fed at my foot lay dead;
I saw them die;
In Ramah a blast went wailing past;
It was Rachel's cry.
But I stand sublime on the shores of Time,
And I pour mine ode,
As Miriam sang to the cymbals' clang,
On the wind to God.

"Once more at my feasts my bards and priests
Shall sit and eat:
And the Shepherd whose sheep are on every steep
Shall bless my meat;
Oh, sweet, men say, is the song by day,
And the feast by night;
But on poisons I thrive, and in death survive
Through ghostly night."

AUBREY DE VERE.

See Note Page 353.

The Dark Palace

THERE beams no light from thy hall to-night,
Oh, House of Fame;
No mead-vat seethes and no smoke upwreathes
O'er the hearth's red flame;
No high bard sings for the joy of thy kings,
And no harpers play;
No hostage moans as thy dungeon rings
As in Muircherteach's day.

Fallen! fallen! to ruin all in
The covering mould;
The painted yew, and the curtains blue,
And the cups of gold;
The linen, yellow as the corn when mellow,
That the princes wore;
And the mirrors brazen for your queens to gaze in,
They are here no more.

The sea-bird's pinion thatched Gormlai's grinnan;
And through windows clear,
Without crystal pane, in her Ard-righ's reign
She looked from here
There were quilts of eider on her couch of cedar;
And her silken shoon
Were as green and soft as the leaves aloft
On a bough in June.

Ah, woe unbounded where the harp once sounded
The wind now sings;
The grey grass shivers where the mead in rivers
Was outpoured for kings;
The min and the methel are lost together
With the spoil of the spears;
The strong dun only has stood dark and lonely
Through a thousand years.

But I'm not in woe for the wine-cup's flow,
For the banquet's cheer,
For tall princesses with their trailing tresses
And their brodered gear;
My grief and my trouble for this palace noble
With no chief to lead
'Gainst the Saxon stranger on the day of danger
Out of Aileach Neid.

ALICE MILLIGAN.

After Death

SHALL mine eyes behold thy glory, oh, my country?
Shall mine eyes behold thy glory?
Or shall the darkness close around them ere the sun-blaze
Break at last upon thy story?

When the nations ope for thee their queenly circle,
As sweet new sister hail thee,
Shall these lips be sealed in callous death and silence,
That have known but to bewail thee?

Shall the ear be deaf that only loved thy praises,
When all men their tribute bring thee?
Shall the mouth be clay that sang thee in thy squalor,
When all poets' mouths shall sing thee?

Ah! the harpings and the salvos and the shoutings
Of thy exiled sons returning,
I should hear, tho' dead and mouldered, and the grave-damps
Should not chill my bosom's burning.

Ah! the tramp of feet victorious! I should hear them
'Mid the shamrocks and the mosses,
And my heart should toss within the shroud and quiver
As a captive dreamer tosses.

I should turn and rend the cere-cloths round me—
Giant sinews I should borrow—
Crying, "Oh, my brothers, I have also loved her
In her loneliness and sorrow!

"Let me join with you the jubilant procession,
Let me chant with you her story;
Then, contented, I shall go back to the shamrocks,
Now mine eyes have seen her glory!"

FANNY PARNELL.

Ways of War

A TERRIBLE and splendid trust,
Heartens the host of Innisfail;
Their dream is of the swift sword-thrust;
The lightning glory of the Gael.

Croagh Patrick is the place of prayers,
And Tara the assembling place:
But each sweet wind of Ireland bears
The trump of battle on its race.

From Dursey Isle to Donegal,
From Howth to Achill, the glad noise
Rings: and the airs of glory fall,
Or victory crowns their fighting joys.

A dream! a dream! an ancient dream!
Yet, ere peace come to Innisfail,
Some weapons on some field must gleam,
Some burning glory fire the Gael.

That field may lie beneath the sun,
Fair for the treading of an host:
That field in realms of thought be won
And armed minds do their uttermost.

Some way, to faithful Innisfail,
Shall come the majesty and awe
Of martial truth, that must prevail,
To lay on all the eternal law.

LIONEL JOHNSON.

This Heritage to the Race of Kings

THIS heritage to the race of kings,
Their children and their children's seed
Have wrought their prophecies in deed
Of terrible and splendid things.

The hands that fought, the hearts that broke
In old immortal tragedies,
These have not failed beneath the skies,
Their children's heads refuse the yoke.

And still their hands shall guard the sod
That holds their father's funeral urn,
Still shall their hearts volcanic burn
With anger of the sons of God.

No alien sword shall earn as wage
The entail of their blood and tears,
No shameful price for peaceful years
Shall ever part this heritage.

JOSEPH PLUNKETT.

The Irish Rapparees

RIGH SHEMUS he has gone to France, and left his crown
behind;

Ill luck be theirs, both day and night, put running in his
mind

Lord Lucan followed after, with his Slashers brave and true,
And now the doleful keen is raised—"What will poor Ireland
do?

What must poor Ireland do?

Our luck," they say, "has gone to France—what can poor
Ireland do?"

Oh! never fear for Ireland, for she has soldiers still;
For Rory's boys are in the wood, and Remy's on the hill;
And never had poor Ireland more loyal hearts than these—
May God be kind and good to them, the faithful Rapparees
The fearless Rapparees!

The jewel were you, Rory, with your Irish Rapparees!

Oh, black's your heart, Clan Oliver, and colder than the clay!
Oh, high's your head, Clan Sassenach, since Sarsfield's gone
away!

It's little love you bear to us, for the sake of long ago
But hold your hand, for Ireland still can strike a deadly
blow—

Can strike a mortal blow—

Och, dar-a-Críost 'tis she that still
Could strike a deadly blow.

The Master's bawn, the Master's seat, a surly bodagh fills;
The Master's son, an outlawed man, is riding on the hills.
But God be praised that round him throng, as thick as summer bees,

The swords that guarded Limerick wall—his faithful Rapparees!

His loving Rapparees!

Who dare say "no" to Rory Oge, with all his Rapparees?

Black Billy Grimes of Latnamard, he racked us long and sore—

God rest the faithful hearts he broke!—we'll never see them more

But I'll go bail he'll break no more, while Truagh has gallows trees;

For why?—he met one lonely night, the fearless Rapparees

The angry Rapparees!

They never sin no more, my boys, who cross the Rapparees.

Now, Sassenach and Cromweller, take heed of what I say—
Keep down your black and angry looks, that scorn us night and day:

For there's a just and wrathful Judge, that every action sees,
And He'll make strong, to right our wrong, the faithful Rapparees!

The fearless Rapparees!

The men that rode by Sarsfield's side, the roving Rapparees!

CHARLES GAVAN DUFFY.

See Note Page 353.

The Memory of the Dead

WHO fears to speak of Ninety-Eight?
Who blushes at the name?
When cowards mock the patriot's fate,
Who hangs his head for shame?
He's all a knave, or half a slave,
Who slights his country thus;
But a true man, like, you, man,
Will fill your glass with us.

We drink the memory of the brave,
The faithful and the few:
Some lie far off beyond the wave,
Some sleep in Ireland, too;
All, all are gone; but still lives on
The fame of those who died;
All true men, like you, men,
Remember them with pride.

Some on the shores of distant lands
Their weary hearts have laid,
And by the stranger's heedless hands
Their lonely graves were made;
But, though their clay be far away
Beyond the Atlantic foam,
In true men, like you, men,
Their spirit's still at home.

The dust of some is Irish earth,
Among their own they rest,
And the same land that gave them birth
Has caught them to her breast;
And we will pray that from their clay
Full many a race may start
Of true men, like you, men,
To act as brave a part.

They rose in dark and evil days
To right their native land;
They kindled here a living blaze
That nothing shall withstand.
Alas! that Might can vanquish Right—
They fell and passed away;
But true men, like you, men,
Are plenty here to-day.

Then here's to their memory—may it be
For us a guiding light,
To hear our strife for liberty,
And teach us to unite—
Through good and ill, be Ireland's still,
Though sad as theirs your fate,
And true men, be you, men,
Like those of Ninety-Eight.

JOHN KELLY INGRAM.

Thro' Grief and Thro' Danger

THRO' grief and thro' danger thy smile hath cheer'd my
way,
Till hope seem'd to bud from each thorn that round me lay;
The darker our fortune, the brighter our pure love burned,
Till shame into glory, till fear into zeal was turned,
Oh! slave as I was, in thy arms my spirit felt free,
And bless'd e'en the sorrows that made me more dear to thee.

Thy rival was honoured, while thou wert wronged and
scorned;
Thy crown was of briers, while gold her brows adorned;
She woo'd me to temples, while thou lay'st hid in caves;
Her friends were all masters, while thine, alas! were slaves;
Yet, cold in the earth at thy feet I would rather be,
Than wed what I lov'd not, or turn one thought from thee.
THOMAS MOORE.

The Irish Mother in the Penal Days

NOW welcome, welcome, baby-boy, unto a mother's fears,
The pleasure of her sufferings, the rainbow of her tears,
The object of your father's hope, in all he hopes to do,
A future man of his own land, to live him o'er anew!

How fondly on thy little brow a mother's eye would trace,
And in thy little limbs, and in each feature of thy face,
His beauty, worth, and manliness, and everything that's his,
Except, my boy, the answering mark of where the fetter is!

Oh! many a weary hundred years his sires that fetter wore,
And he has worn it since the day that him his mother bore;
And now, my son, it waits on you, the moment you are born;
The old hereditary badge of suffering and scorn!

Alas, my boy, so beautiful!—alas, my love so brave!
And must your gallant Irish limbs still drag it to the grave?
And you, my son, yet have a son, foredoomed a slave to be,
Whose mother still must weep o'er him the tears I weep o'er
thee!

JOHN BANIM.

A Song of Freedom

IN CAVAN of little lakes,
As I was walking with the wind,
And no one seen beside me there,
There came a song into my mind;
It came as if the whispered voice
Of one, but none of human kind,
Who walked with me in Cavan then,
And he invisible as wind.

On Urris of Inish-Owen,
As I went up the mountain side,
The brook that came leaping down
Cried to me—for joy it cried;
And when from off the summit far
I looked o'er land and water wide,
I was more joyous than the brook
That met me on the mountain side.

To Ara of Connacht's isles,
As I went sailing o'er the sea,
The wind's word, the brook's word,
The wave's word, was plain to me—
As we are, though she is not,
As we are, shall Banba be—
There is no king can rule the wind,
There is no fetter for the sea.

ALICE MULLIGAN.

Terence MacSweeney

SEE, though the oil be low more purely still and higher
The flame burns in the body's lamp! The watchers still
Gaze with unseeing eyes while the Promethean Will,
The Uncreated Light, the Everlasting Fire
Sustains itself against the torturer's desire
Even as the fabled Titan chained upon the hill.
Burn on, shine on, thou immortality, until
We, too, have lit our lamps at the funereal pyre;
Till we, too, can be noble, unshakable, undismayed:
Till we, too, can burn with the holy flame, and know
There is that within us can triumph over pain,
And go to death, alone, slowly, and unafraid.
The candles of God are already burning row on row:
Farewell, lightbringer, fly to thy heaven again!

A. E.

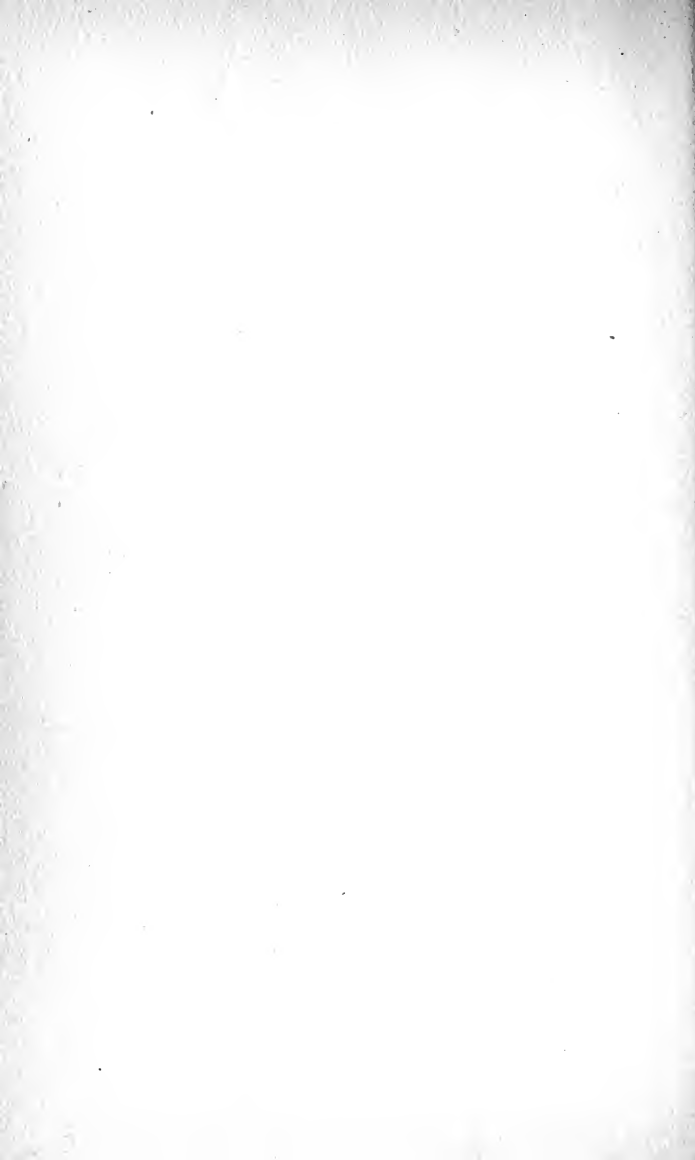
The Three Woes

THAT angel whose charge was Eiré sang thus, o'er the
dark Isle winging;
By a virgin his song was heard at a tempest's ruinous close:
"Three golden ages God gave while your tender green blade
was springing;
Faith's earliest harvest is reaped. To-day God sends you
three woes.

"For ages three without laws ye shall flee as beasts in the
forest;
For an age and a half age faith shall bring, not peace, but a
sword;
Then laws shall rend you, like eagles sharp-fanged, of your
scourges the sorest;
When these three woes are past, look up, for your hope is
restored.

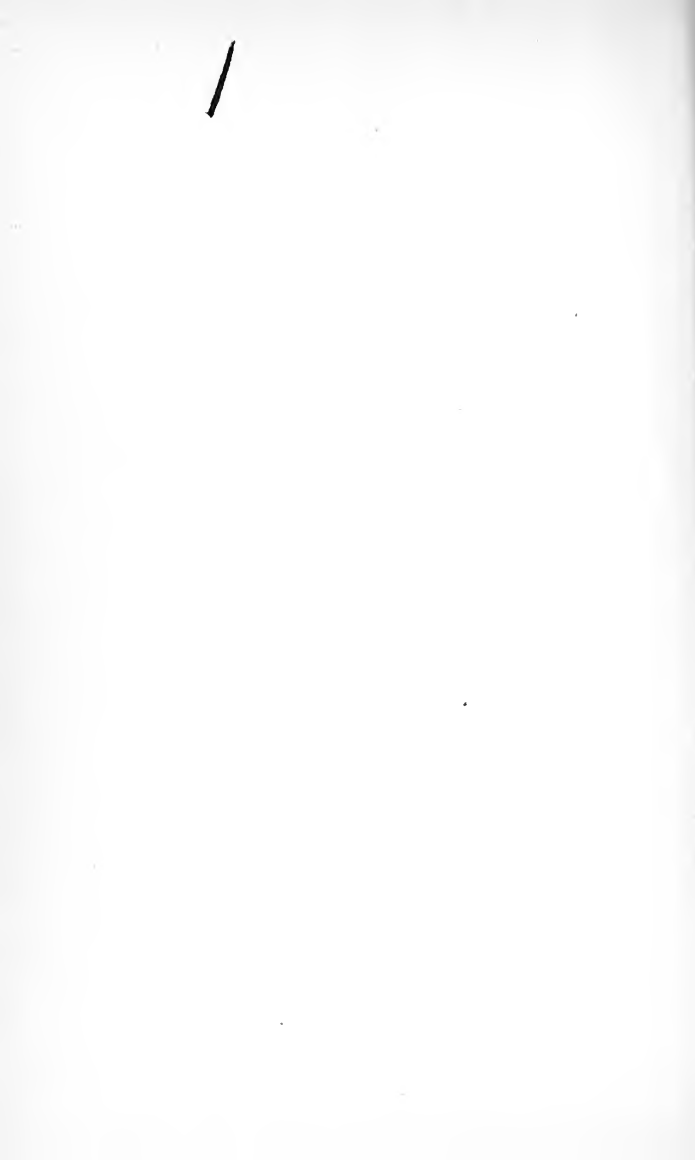
"The times of your woes shall be twice the time of your
foregone glory;
But fourfold at last shall lie the grain on your granary
floor."
The seas in vapour shall flee, and in ashes the mountains
hoary;
Let God do that which He wills. Let his servants endure
and adore!"

AUBREY DE VERE.



PART VII

PERSONAL POEMS



I Am Raferty

I AM Raferty the Poet
Full of hope and love,
With eyes that have no light,
With gentleness that has no misery.

Going west upon my pilgrimage
By the light of my heart,
Feeble and tired
To the end of my road.

Behold me now,
And my face to the wall,
A-playing music
Unto empty pockets.

Translated by DOUGLAS HYDE.

See Note Page 353.

At the Mid Hour of Night

AT THE mid hour of night, when stars are weeping, I fly
the lone vale we loved, when life shone warm in thine
eye;

And I think oft, if spirits can steal from the regions of air,
To revisit past scenes of delight, thou wilt come to me there,
And tell me our love is remembered, even in the sky.

Then I sing the wild song 'twas once such pleasure to hear
When our voices commingling breathed, like one, on the ear;
And, as Echo far off through the vale my sad orison rolls,
I think, oh, my love! 'tis thy voice from the Kingdom of
Souls,

Faintly answering still the notes that once were so dear.

THOMAS MOORE.

Night

MYSTERIOUS Night! When our first parent knew
Thee, from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely Frame,
This glorious canopy of Light and Blue?
Yet, 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting Flame,
Hesperus, with the Host of Heaven, came,
And lo! Creation widened on Man's view.

Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed
Within thy beams, O Sun! or who could find,
Whilst flower and leaf and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind!
Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife?
If Light can thus deceive, wherefore not Life?

JOSEPH BLANCO WHITE.

See Note Page 353.

Nepenthe

O BLEST unfabled Incense Tree,
That burns in glorious Araby,
With red scent chalicing the air,
Till earth-life grow Elysian there!

Half buried to her flaming breast
In this bright tree she makes her nest,
Hundred-sunned Phoenix! when she must
Crumble at length to hoary dust;

Her gorgeous death-bed, her rich pyre
Burnt up with aromatic fire;
Her urn, sight-high from spoiler men,
Her birthplace when self-born again.

The mountainless green wilds among,
Here ends she her unechoing song:
With amber tears and odorous sighs
Mourned by the desert where she dies.

GEORGE DARLEY.

See Note Page 353.

Eileen Aroon

WHEN, like the early rose,
Eileen aroon!

Beauty in childhood blows,
Eileen aroon!

When, like a diadem,
Buds blush around the stem,
Which is the fairest gem?
Eileen aroon!

Is it the laughing eye,
Eileen aroon!

Is it the timid sigh,
Eileen aroon!

Is it the tender tone,
Soft as the stringed harp's moan?
Oh! it is Truth alone.
Eileen aroon!

When, like the rising day,
Eileen aroon!

Love sends his early ray,
Eileen aroon!

What makes his dawning glow
Changeless through joy or woe?
Only the constant know—
Eileen aroon!

I know a valley fair,
Eileen aroon!
I knew a cottage there,
Eileen aroon!
Far in that valley shade
I knew a gentle maid,
Flower of a hazel glade,
Eileen aroon!

Who in the song so sweet?
Eileen aroon!
Who in the dance so fleet?
Eileen aroon!
Dear were her charms to me,
Dearer her laughter free,
Dearest her constancy,
Eileen aroon!

Were she no longer true,
Eileen aroon!
What should her lover do?
Eileen aroon!
Fly with his broken chain
Far o'er the sounding main,
Never to love again,
Eileen aroon!

Youth must with time decay,
Eileen aroon!
Beauty must fade away,
Eileen aroon!
Castles are sacked in war,
Chieftains are scattered far,
Truth is a fixed star,
Eileen aroon!

GERALD GRIFFIN.

And Then No More

I SAW her once, one little while, and then no more:
'Twas Eden's light on Earth a while, and then no more.
Amid the throng she passed along the meadow-floor:
Spring seemed to smile on Earth awhile, and then no more;
But whence she came, which way she went, what garb she
wore
I noted not; I gazed a while, and then no more!

I saw her once, one little while, and then no more:
'Twas Paradise on Earth a while, and then no more.
Ah! what avail my vigils pale, my magic lore?
She shone before mine eyes awhile, and then no more.
The shallop of my peace is wrecked on Beauty's shore.
Near Hope's fair isle it rode awhile, and then no more!

I saw her once, one little while, and then no more:
Earth looked like Heaven a little while, and then no more.
Her presence thrilled and lighted to its inner core
My desert breast a little while, and then no more.
So may, perchance, a meteor glance at midnight o'er
Some ruined pile a little while, and then no more!

I saw her once, one little while, and then no more:
The earth was Peri-land awhile, and then no more.
Oh, might I see but once again, as once before,
Through chance or wile, that shape awhile, and then no
more!
Death soon would heal my griefs! This heart, now sad and
sore,
Would beat anew a little while, and then no more.

JAMES CLARENCE MANGAN.

Maire My Girl

OVER the dim blue hills
Strays a wild river,
Over the dim blue hills
Rests my heart ever.
Dearer and brighter than
Jewels and pearl,
Dwells she in beauty there,
Maire my girl.

Down upon Claris heath
Shines the soft berry,
On the brown harvest tree
Droops the red cherry.
Sweeter thy honey lips,
Softer the curl
Straying adown thy cheeks,
Maire my girl.

'Twas on an April eve
That I first met her;
Many an eve shall pass
Ere I forget her.
Since my young heart has been
Wrapped in a whirl,
Thinking and dreaming of
Maire my girl.

She is too kind and fond
Ever to grieve me,
She has too pure a heart
E'er to deceive me.
Was I Tyrconnell's chief
Or Desmond's earl,
Life would be dark, wanting
Maire my girl.

Over the dim blue hills
Strays a wild river,
Over the dim blue hills
Rests my heart ever;
Dearer and brighter than
Jewels or pearl,
Dwells she in beauty there,
Maire my girl.

JOHN KEEGAN CASEY.

Helas!

TO drift with every passion till my soul
Is as a stringed lute on which all winds can play,
Is it for this that I have given away
Mine ancient wisdom and austere control?
Methinks my life is a twice-written scroll
Scrawled over on some boyish holiday
With idle songs for pipe and virelay,
Which do but mar the secret of the whole.

Surely there was a time I might have trod
The sunlit heights, and from life's dissonance
Struck one clear chord to reach the ears of God:
Is that time dead? Lo! with a little rod
I did but touch the honey of romance—
And must I lose my soul's inheritance?

OSCAR WILDE.

In the Streets of Catania

("The streets of Catania are paved with blocks of the lava
of Ætna")

ALL that was beautiful and just,
All that was pure and sad
Went in one little, moving plot of dust
The world called bad.

Came like a highwayman, and went,
One who was bold and gay,
Left when his lightly loving mood was spent
Thy heart to pay.

By-word of little street and men,
Narrower theirs the shame,
Tread thou the lava loving leaves, and then
Turn whence it came.

Ætna, all wonderful, whose heart
Glowes as thine throbbing glowes,
Almond and citron bloom quivering at start,
Ends in pure snows.

ROGER CASEMENT.

The Doves

THE house where I was born,
Where I was young and gay,
Grows old amid its corn,
Amid its scented hay.

Moan of the cushat dove,
In silence rich and deep;
The old head I love
Nods to its quiet sleep.

Where once were nine and ten
Now two keep house together;
The doves moan and complain
All day in the still weather.

What wind, bitter and great,
Has swept the country's face,
Altered, made desolate
The heart-remembered place?

What wind, bitter and wild,
Has swept the towering trees
Beneath whose shade a child
Long since gathered heartease?

Under the golden eaves
The house is still and sad,
As though it grieves and grieves
For many a lass and lad.

The cushat doves complain
All day in the still weather ;
Where once were nine or ten
But two keep house together.

KATHERINE TYNAN.

Sheep and Lambs

ALL in the April evening,
April airs were abroad ;
The sheep with their little lambs
Passed me by on the road.

The sheep with their little lambs
Passed me by on the road ;
All in the April evening
I thought on the Lamb of God.

The lambs were weary and crying
With a weak, human cry.
I thought on the Lamb of God
Going meekly to die.

Up in the blue, blue mountains
Dewy pastures are sweet ;
Rest for the little bodies,
Rest for the little feet.

But for the Lamb of God,
Up on the hill-top green,
Only a cross of shame
Two stark crosses between.

All in the April evening,
April airs were abroad ;
I saw the sheep with their lambs,
And thought on the Lamb of God.

KATHERINE TYNAN.

The Pity of Love

A PITY beyond all telling
Is hid in the heart of love:
The folk who are buying and selling,
The clouds on their journey above,
The cold, wet winds ever blowing,
And the shadowy hazel grove
Where mouse-grey waters are flowing
Threaten the head that I love.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS.

The Folly of Being Comforted

ONE that is ever kind said yesterday:
"Your well beloved's hair has threads of grey,
And little shadows come about her eyes;
Time can but make it easier to be wise,
Though now it's hard, till trouble is at an end;
And so be patient, be wise and patient, friend."
But heart, there is no comfort, not a grain;
Time can but make her beauty over again,
Because of that great nobleness of hers;
The fire that stirs about her, when she stirs
Burns but more clearly. O she had not these ways,
When all the wild Summer was in her gaze.
O heart! O heart! if she'd but turn her head,
You'd know the folly of being comforted.

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS.

Think

THINK, the ragged turf-boy urges
O'er the dusty road his asses;
Think, on the seashore for the lonely
Heron wings along the sand.
Think, in woodland under oak-boughs
Now the streaming sunbeam passes:
And bethink thee thou art servant
To the same all-moving hand.

CHARLES WEEKS.

Immortality

WE MUST pass like smoke or live within the spirit's fire;
For we can no more than smoke unto the flame return
If our thought has changed to dream, our will unto desire,
As smoke we vanish though the fire may burn.

Lights of infinite pity star the grey dusk of our days:
Surely here is soul: with it we have eternal breath:
In the fire of love we live, or pass by many ways,
By unnumbered ways of dream to death.

"A. E."

A Farewell

I GO down from the hill in gladness, and half with a pain I
depart,
Where the Mother with gentlest breathing made music on lip
and in heart;
For I know that my childhood is over: a call comes out of
the vast,
And the love that I had in the old time, like beauty in twi-
light, is past.

I am fired by a Danaan whisper of battles afar in the world,
And my thought is no longer of peace, for the banners in
dream are unfurled,
And I pass from the council of stars and of hills to a life
that is new:
And I bid to you stars and you mountains a tremulous long
adieu.

I will come once again as a master, who played here as a
child in my dawn;
I will enter the heart of the hills where the gods of the old
world are gone.
And will war like the bright Hound of Ulla with princes of
earth and of sky.
For my dream is to conquer the heavens and battle for king-
ship on high.

"A. E."

To Morfydd

A VOICE on the winds,
A voice by the waters,
Wanders and cries :
Oh ! what are the winds?
And what are the waters?
Mine are your eyes !

Western the winds are,
And western the waters,
Where the light lies :
Oh ! what are the winds?
And what are the waters?
Mine are your eyes !

Cold, cold, grow the winds,
And wild grow the waters,
Where the sun dies :
Oh ! what are the winds?
And what are the waters?
Mine are your eyes !

And down the night winds,
And down the night waters,
The music flies :
Oh ! what are the winds?
And what are the waters?
Cold be the winds,
And wild be the waters,
So mine be your eyes !
LIONEL JOHNSON.

Love on the Mountain

MY LOVE comes down from the mountain
Through the mists of dawn;
I look, and the star of the morning
From the sky is gone.

My love comes down from the mountain,
At dawn, dewy-sweet;
Did you step from the star to the mountain,
O little white feet?

O whence came your twining tresses
And your shining eyes,
But out of the gold of the morning
And the blue of the skies?

The misty morning is burning
In the sun's red fire,
And the heart in my breast is burning
And lost in desire.

I follow you into the valley
But no word can I say;
To the East or the West I will follow
Till the dusk of my day.

THOMAS BOYD.

Acceptation

ESTABLISH in some better way
My life, thou Godhead! that I may
Know it as virtue ranks
To scorn Thy gifts, or give Thee thanks.

For now I feel Thee near, unsought.
But why, when I seemed worth Thy thought,
High-souled, impatient for a task—
Why not have called me then, I ask?

No mountings of the spirit please;
Thou dost accept our dregs and lees;
The wise are they that feel Thy rod,
And grief alone is near to God.

JOHN EGLINTON.

Mad Song

I HEAR the wind a-blowing,
I hear the corn a-growing,
I hear the Virgin praying,
I hear what she is saying!

HESTER SIGERSON.

The Wings of Love

I WILL row my boat on Muckcross Lake when the grey of
the dove

Comes down at the end of the day; and a quiet like prayer
Grows soft in your eyes, and among your fluttering hair

The red of the sun is mixed with the red of your cheek.

I will row you, O boat of my heart! till our mouths have for-
gotten to speak

In the silence of love, broken only by trout that spring

And are gone, like a fairy's finger that casts a ring

With the luck of the world for the hand that can hold it fast.

I will rest on my oars, my eyes on your eyes, till our thoughts
have passed

From the lake and the sky and the rings of the jumping fish;

Till our ears are filled from the reeds with a sudden swish,

And a sound like the beating of flails in the time of corn.

We shall hold our breath while a wonderful thing is born

From the songs that were chanted by bards in the days gone
by;

For a wild white swan shall be leaving the lake for the sky,

With the curve of her neck stretched out in a silver spear.

Oh! then when the creak of her wings shall have brought
her near,

We shall hear again a swish, and a beating of flails,

And a creaking of oars, and a sound like the wind in sails,

As the mate of her heart shall follow her into the air.

O wings of my soul! we shall think of Angus and Caer,

And Etain and Midir, that were changed into wild white
swans

To fly round the ring of the heavens, through the dusks and
the dawns,
Unseen by all but true lovers, till judgment day,
Because they had loved for love only. O love! I will say,
For a woman and man with eternity ringing them round,
And the heavens above and below them, a poor thing it is to
be bound
To four low walls that will spill like a pedlar's pack,
And a quilt that will run into holes, and a churn that will
dry and crack.
Oh! better than these, a dream in the night, or our heart's
mute prayer
That O'Donoghue, the enchanted man, should pass between
water and air,
And say, I will change them each to a wild white swan,
Like the lovers Angus and Midir, and their loved ones, Caer
and Etain,
Because they have loved for love only, and have searched
through the shadows of things
For the Heart of all hearts, through the fire of love, and the
wine of love, and the wings.

JAMES H. COUSINS.

On a Poet Patriot

HIS songs were a little phrase
Of eternal song,
Drowned in the harping of lays
More loud and long.

His deed was a single word,
Called out alone
In a night when no echo stirred
To laughter or moan.

But his songs new souls shall thrill,
The loud harps dumb,
And his deed the echoes fill
When the dawn is come.

THOMAS MACDONAGH.

Wishes for My Son

Born on Saint Cecilia's Day, 1912

NOW, my son, is life for you,
And I wish you joy of it,—
Joy of power in all you do,
Deeper passion, better wit
Than I had who had enough,
Quicker life and length thereof,
More of every gift but love.

Love I have beyond all men,
Love that now you share with me—
What have I to wish you then
But that you be good and free,
And that God to you may give
Grace in stronger days to live?

For I wish you more than I
Ever knew of glorious deed,
Though no rapture passed me by
That an eager heart could heed,
Though I followed heights and sought
Things the sequel never brought.

Wild and perilous holy things
Flaming with a martyr's blood,
And the joy that laughs and sings
Where a foe must be withstood,
Joy of headlong happy chance
Leading on the battle dance.

But I found no enemy,
No man in a world of wrong,
That Christ's word of charity
Did not render clean and strong—
Who was I to judge my kind,
Blindest groper of the blind?

God to you may give the sight
And the clear, undoubting strength
Wars to knit for single right,
Freedom's war to knit at length,
And to win through wrath and strife,
To the sequel of my life.

But for you, so small and young,
Born on Saint Cecilia's Day,
I in more harmonious song
Now for nearer joys should pray—
Simpler joys: the natural growth
Of your childhood and your youth,
Courage, innocence, and truth:

These for you, so small and young,
In your hand and heart and tongue.

THOMAS MACDONAGH.

Greeting

OVER the wave-patterned sea-floor,
Over the long sunburnt ridge of the world,
I bid the winds seek you.
I bid them cry to you
Night and morning
A name you loved once;
I bid them bring to you
Dreams, and strange imaginings, and sleep.

ELLA YOUNG.

The Sedges

I WHISPERED my great sorrow
To every listening sedge;
And they bent, bowed with my sorrow,
Down to the water's edge.

But she stands and laughs lightly
To see me sorrow so,
Like the light winds that laughing
Across the water go.

If I could tell the bright ones
That quiet-hearted move,
They would bend down like the sedges
With the sorrow of love.

But she stands laughing lightly,
Who all my sorrow knows,
Like the little wind that laughing
Across the water blows.

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN

The Half Door

DARK eyes, wonderful, strange and dear they shone
A moment's space;
And wandering under the white stars I had gone
In a strange place.

Over the half door careless, your white hand
A moment gleamed;
And I was walking on some great storm-heaped strand
Forever it seemed.

I would give all that glory to see once more,
A moment's space,
Your eyes gleam strange and dark above the half door,
Your hand's white grace.

SEUMAS O'SULLIVAN.

This Heart That Flutters Near My Heart

THIS heart that flutters near my heart
My hope and all my riches is,
Unhappy when we draw apart
And happy between kiss and kiss;
My hope and all my riches—yes!—
And all my happiness.

For there, as in some mossy nest
The wrens will divers treasures keep,
I laid those treasures I possessed
Ere that mine eyes had learned to weep.
Shall we not be as wise as they
Though love live but a day?

JAMES JOYCE.

I Hear an Army

I HEAR an army charging upon the land,
And the thunder of horses plunging, foam about their
knees:
Arrogant, in black armour, behind them stand,
Disdaining the reins, with fluttering whips, the charioteers.

They cry unto the night their battle-name:
I moan in sleep when I hear afar their whirling laughter.
They cleave the gloom of dreams, a blinding flame,
Clanging, clanging upon my heart as upon an anvil.

They come shaking in triumph their long, green hair:
They come out of the sea and run shouting by the shore.
My heart, have you no wisdom thus to despair?
My love, my love, my love, why have you left me alone?

JAMES JOYCE.

To Death

I HAVE not gathered gold;
The fame that I won perished;
In love I found but sorrow,
That withered my life.

Of wealth or of glory
I shall leave nothing behind me
(I think it, O God, enough!)
But my name in the heart of a child.

PADRAIC PEARSE.

Translated by Thomas MacDonagh.

Ideal

NAKED I saw thee,
O beauty of beauty!
And I blinded my eyes
For fear I should flinch.

I heard thy music,
O sweetness of sweetness!
And I shut my ears
For fear I should fail.

I kissed thy lips
O sweetness of sweetness!
And I hardened my heart
For fear of my ruin.

I blinded my eyes
And my ears I shut,
I hardened my heart
And my love I quenched.

I turned my back
On the dream I had shaped,
And to this road before me
My face I turned.

I set my face
To the road here before me,
To the work that I see,
To the death that I shall meet.

PADRAIC PEARSE.

Translated by Thomas MacDonagh.

River-Mates

I'LL be an otter, and I'll let you swim
A mate beside me; we will venture down
A deep, dark river, when the sky above
Is shut of the sun; spoilers are we,
Thick-coated; no dog's tooth can bite at our veins,
With eyes and ears of poachers; deep-earthed ones
Turned hunters; let him slip past
The little vole; my teeth are on an edge
For the King-fish of the River!

I hold him up
The glittering salmon that smells of the sea;
I hold him high and whistle!

Now we go
Back to our earths; we will tear and eat
Sea-smelling salmon; you will tell the cubs
I am the Booty-bringer, I am the Lord
Of the River; the deep, dark, full and flowing River!

PADRAIC COLUM.

The Betrayal

WHEN you were weary, roaming the wide world over,
I gave my fickle heart to a new lover.
Now they tell me that you are lying dead:
O mountains fall on me and hide my head!

When you lay burning in the throes of fever,
He vowed me love by the willow-margined river:
Death smote you there—here was your trust betrayed,
O darkness, cover me, I am afraid!

Yea, in the hour of your supremest trial,
I laughed with him! The shadows on the dial
Stayed not, aghast at my dread ignorance:
Nor man nor angel looked at me askance.

.

Under the mountains there is peace abiding,
Darkness shall be pavilion for my hiding,
Tears shall blot out the sin of broken faith,
The lips that falsely kissed, shall kiss but Death.

ALICE FURLONG.

The Daisies

IN THE scented bud of the morning—O,
When the windy grass went rippling
far,

I saw my dear one walking slow,
In the field where the daisies are.

We did not laugh and we did not speak
As we wandered happily to and fro;
I kissed my dear on either cheek,
In the bud of the morning—O.

A lark sang up from the breezy land,
A lark sang down from a cloud afar,
And she and I went hand in hand
In the field where the daisies are.

JAMES STEPHENS.

The Goat Paths

THE crooked paths go every way
Upon the hill—they wind about
Through the heather in and out
Of the quiet sunniness.
And there the goats, day after day,
Stray in sunny quietness,
Cropping here and cropping there,
As they pause and turn and pass,
Now a bit of heather spray,
Now a mouthful of the grass.

In the deeper sunniness,
In the place where nothing stirs,
Quietly in quietness,
In the quiet of the furze,
For a time they come and lie
Staring on the roving sky.

If you approach they run away,
They leap and stare, away they bound,
With a sudden angry sound,
To the sunny quietude;
Crouching down where nothing stirs
In the silence of the furze,
Crouching down again to brood
In the sunny solitude.

If I were as wise as they,
I would stray apart and brood,
I would beat a hidden way
Through the quiet heather spray
To a sunny solitude;

And should you come I'd run away,
I would make an angry sound,
I would stare and turn and bound
To the deeper quietude,
To the place where nothing stirs
In the silence of the furze.

In that airy quietness
I would think as long as they;
Through the quiet sunniness
I would stray away to brood
By a hidden, beaten way
In the sunny solitude,

I would think until I found
Something I can never find,
Something lying on the ground,
In the bottom of my mind.

JAMES STEPHENS.

The Spark

BECAUSE I used to shun
Death and the mouth of hell
And count my battles won
If I should see the sun
The blood and smoke dispel.

Because I used to pray
That living I might see
The dawning light of day
Set me upon my way
And from my fetters free,
Because I used to seek
Your answer to my prayer
And that your soul should speak
For strengthening of the weak
To struggle with despair,

Now I have seen my shame
That I should thus deny
My soul's divinest flame,
Now shall I shout your name,
Now shall I seek to die

By any hands but these
In battle or in flood,
On any lands or seas,
No more shall I spare ease,
No more shall I spare blood

When I have need to fight
For heaven or for your heart,

Against the powers of light
Or darkness I shall smite
Until their might depart,

Because I know the spark
Of God has no eclipse,
Now Death and I embark
And sail into the dark
With laughter on our lips.

JOSEPH PLUNKETT.

A Silent Mouth

O LITTLE green leaf on the bough, you hear the lark in
morn,
You hear the grey feet of the wind stir in the shimmering
corn,
You hear, low down in the grass,
The Singing Sidhe as they pass,
Do you ever hear, O little green flame,
My loved one calling, whispering my name?

O little green leaf on the bough, like my lips you must ever
be dumb,
For a maiden may never speak until love to her heart says
"Come."
A mouth in its silence is sweet
But my heart cries loud when we meet,
And I turn my head with a bitter sigh
When the boy who has stolen my love, unheeding, goes by.

I have made my heart as the stones in the street for his tread,
I have made my love as the shadow that falls from his dear
gold head,
But the stones with his footsteps ring,
And the shadow keeps following,
And just as the quiet shadow goes ever beside or before,
So must I go silent and lonely and loveless for evermore.

CATHAL O'BRYNE.

He Whom a Dream Hath Possessed

HE WHOM a dream hath possessed knoweth no more of
doubting,
For mist and the blowing of winds and the mouthing of
words he scorns;
Not the sinuous speech of schools he hears, but a knightly
shouting,
And never comes darkness down, yet he greeteth a million
morns.

He whom a dream hath possessed knoweth no more of roam-
ing;
All roads and the flowing of waves and the speediest flight
he knows,
But wherever his feet are set, his soul is forever homing,
And going he comes, and coming he heareth a call and goes.

He whom a dream hath possessed knoweth no more of sorrow,
At death and the dropping of leaves and the fading of suns
he smiles,
For a dream remembers no past and scorns the desire of a
morrow,
And a dream in a sea of doom sets surely the ultimate isles.

He whom a dream hath possessed treads the impalpable
marches,
From the dust of the day's long road he leaps to a laughing
star,
And the ruin of worlds that fall he views from eternal arches,
And rides God's battlefield in a flashing and golden car,
SHAEMAS O'SHEEL.

The Wind Bloweth Where It Listeth

MY HEART lies light in my own breast
That yesterday in yours found rest.

Indeed, beloved, I would stay
With you to-day as yesterday;

But oh! the being comes and goes,
The spirit is a wind that blows.

Though lip to lip no more we press
Our spirits feel that tenderness

That woke within us here and fled
To its own heaven overhead.

It sits there in a starry place,
With looks of longing on its face

And beckons us to mount and find
The love that fled upon the wind.

Not the old wayward child to see
But some bright-haired divinity.

SUSAN L. MITCHELL.

The Apple-Tree

I SAW the archangels in my apple-tree last night,
I saw them like great birds in the starlight—
Purple and burning blue, crimson and shining white.

And each to each they tossed an apple to and fro,
And once I heard their laughter gay and low;
And yet I felt no wonder that it should be so.

But when the apple came one time to Michael's lap
I heard him say: "The mysteries that enwrap
The earth and fill the heavens can be read here, mayhap."

Then Gabriel spoke: "I praise the deed, the hidden thing."
"The beauty of the blossom of the spring
I praise," cried Raphael. Uriel: "The wise leaves I sing."

And Michael: "I will praise the fruit, perfected, round,
Full of the love of God, herein being bound
His mercies gathered from the sun and rain and ground."

So sang they till a small wind through the branches stirred,
And spoke of coming dawn; and at its word
Each fled away to heaven, winged like a bird.

NANCY CAMPBELL.

SLAIN THE!



Slainthe!

I SPEAK with a proud tongue of the people who were
And the people who are,
The worthy of Ardara, the Rosses and Inishkeel,
My kindred—
The people of the hills and the dark-haired passes
My neighbours on the lift of the brae,
In the lap of the valley.

To them Slainthe!

I speak of the old men,
The wrinkle-rutted,
Who dodder about foot-weary—
For their day is as the day that has been and is no more—
Who warm their feet by the fire,
And recall memories of the times that are gone;
Who kneel in the lamplight and pray
For the peace that has been theirs—
And who beat one dry-veined hand against another
Even in the sun—
For the coldness of death is on them.

I speak of the old women
Who danced to yesterday's fiddle
And dance no longer.
They sit in a quiet place and dream
And see visions
Of what is to come,
Of their issue,
Which has blossomed to manhood and womanhood—

And seeing thus
They are happy
For the day that was leaves no regrets,
And peace is theirs,
And perfection.

I speak of the strong men
Who shoulder their burdens in the hot day,
Who stand in the market place
And bargain in loud voices,
Showing their stock to the world.
Straight the glance of their eyes—
Broad-shouldered,
Supple.
Under their feet the holms blossom,
The harvest yields.
And their path is of prosperity.

I speak of the women,
Strong-hipped, full-bosomed,
Who drive the cattle to graze at dawn,
Who milk the cows at dusk.
Grace in their homes,
And in the crowded ways
Modest and seemly—
Mother of children!

I speak of the children
Of the many townlands,
Blossoms of the Bogland,
Flowers of the Valley,
Who know not yesterday, nor to-morrow,
And are happy,
The pride of those who have begot them.

And thus it is,
Ever and always,
And Ardara, the Rosses and Inishkeel—
Here, as elsewhere,
The Weak, the Strong, and the Blossoming—
And thus my kindred.

To them Slainthe.

1885

PATRICK MACGILL.

NOTES

1. Let Us Be Merry Before We Go (Page 37).

Properly the title of this poem is "The Deserter's Meditation." Because of its structure with its remarkable internal rhymes one might be led to believe that it reproduces a Gaelic form: the resemblance to the Great Rannaigheacht metre is noticeable. The Rannaigheacht metres, however, make lines of seven syllables. Dr. Hyde's example of verse in the Great Rannaigheacht is from a comic poem that he translates—

To hear handsome women weep
In deep distress sobbing sore,
Or gangs of geese scream from far—
They sweeter are than Art's snore.

See a "Literary History of Ireland." The poet of "The Deserter's Meditation," John Philpot Curran, was an Irish-speaker from childhood, and this poem of his marks the first departure in Anglo-Irish poetry from the traditional English forms and towards Gaelic forms. He was the greatest of Irish orators, and his defence of Peter Finnerty is amongst the high achievements in oratory. The fact that he was the father of Sarah Curran, Robert Emmet's sweetheart, brings him into Irish romantic history.

2. The Coolun (Page 39).

It is well, perhaps, to distinguish between "Coolun" and

"Colleen." Coolun (Cuil-Fhionn) means one with long flowing hair. Applied to a man the designation would have suggested that he was a champion of Gaeldom who wore his hair in the ancient fashion forbidden by English statutes. Perhaps it was this that gave the designation its romantic association. The famous song that is given here is about a girl.

3. Cois na Tineadh (Page 46).

This title means "Beside the fire."

4. Ballad of Douglas Bridge (Page 50).

Francis Carlin supplies me with this note. "Redmond O'Hanlon was born about 1623 in the County Armagh where his father owned seven townlands. During the Cromwellian settlement this estate was taken over by the English. Then Redmond and his three brothers took to the hills as "Rapparees." He went to France, where he was given the title of Count, which title was credited to him later in the French gazettes. He returned to Ireland before 1671 and became the leader of the "Rapparees" of Ulster. Having refused to bear witness against the Primate, Oliver Plunkett, one hundred pounds was offered for his head by Ormonde, the viceroy of Ireland. He was slain while asleep by a clansman who brought his head to Downpatrick Gaol. The Receiver's Book in the Dublin Record Office contains the following entry, 'Paid to Art O'Hanlon as a reward for killing Redmond O'Hanlon, a proclaimed Rebell and Traytor, as by Concordation dated 6th of May 1681—One Hundred Pounds.'

The nearest translation of "Rapparees" would be "guerillas," and perhaps the best comparison would be with the "Comitadjis" of Turkish Bulgaria and Macedonia. The disbanded Irish armies formed the nucleus for these bands. They levied toll on the Planters who had taken over the confiscated Irish estates; they avenged some of the wrongs inflicted upon the peasantry, and they checked the exactions of "the Bashaws of the west and south," as Lecky calls the landowners of the time. Unfortunately there was always a pull from the woods and hillsides of Ireland towards the camps of the Irish Brigade in France. See "The Irish Rapparees" and note to it.

5. Allulu mo Wauleen (Page 74).

The title might be translated, "Hail my little bag." "Sau-

leen" means the "little heel" or end of the bag; "mo chardas" means "my dear friend"; a "dark man" is a blind man. I do not know if it has an Irish original, but the number of Gaelic words in it suggests that it is a translation.

6. My Love Is Like the Sun (Page 83).

Burns re-wrote some stanzas of this song and so it sometimes appears in his works. The reference, however, to the Curragh of Kildare stamps it as an Irish popular song.

7. Draherin O Machree (Page 91).

This title means "Dear Little Brother of My Heart." It seems to date from the time of the Crimean war.

8. The Boyne Water (Page 95).

This is the oldest and most spirited version of the famous Orange song that celebrates the victory of the Williamites over the Jacobites at the battle of the Boyne.

9. The Shan Van Vocht (Page 98).

The title is literally "The Poor Old Woman." This was a "secret" name for Ireland, like "Roisin Dubh" (the little Dark Rose) and Kathleen ni Houlahan (Kathleen the daughter of Houlahan). These "secret" names were given partly to hide what might be thought a seditious element in the utterance, and partly because of the Gaelic liking for what is esoteric and symbolic. The Shan Van Vocht is a peasant song made at the time when the Irish were expecting help from revolutionary France, in 1798.

10. The Croppy Boy (Page 103).

This also is a ballad of 'Ninety Eight. At this time the native Irish wore their hair short and the epithet "croppies" was contemptuously applied to them.

11. Aimirgin's Invocation (Page 109).

Traditionally this is the earliest Irish poem being supposed to have been spoken by Aimirgin, the son of Mile, from the deck of one of the invading Milesian ships. The metre of

the original is called Rosg. Poems in this metre, Dr. Hyde remarks (in "A Literary History of Ireland"), depended for their effect upon rapidity of utterance partly, and partly upon a tendency towards alliteration. In this particular utterance a remarkable effect is gained by the repetition of images as a sort of internal rhyme.

12. St. Patrick's Breastplate (Page 110).

The original of this rhapsody is also in the Rosg metre—it is a kind of rhymed or half rhymed utterance. The language of the poem is, Dr. Hyde says, very old; it is known to have been current in the seventh century and it was then ascribed to Saint Patrick. It is called the "Lorica" and also "The Deer's Cry." According to tradition, St. Patrick uttered it while on his way to Tara, where he was for the first time to confront the power of the Pagan High-King of Ireland. Assassins were in wait for him and his companions, but as he chanted the hymn it seemed to the hidden band that a herd of deer went by.

13. The Sleep Song of Grainne over Dermuid (Page 114).

The original of this beautiful poem is given in "Dunairé Finn" (The Poem Book of Finn) in the Irish Texts Society's publications. Grainne, the affianced wife of Fionn MacCumhal, is flying with Dermuid, one of Fionn's band. The linnet twitters, the grouse flies, the wild duck pushes out from the stream—everything around signals to Grainne that pursuers are close. The poem is wonderfully dramatic in its blend of affection and alarm, all set to the soothing measure of a lullaby.

14. The Lay of Prince Marvan (Page 118).

Marvan the Hermit was the brother of Guaire, the King of Connacht. Once Guaire asked him why he would not come to live in the king's house. The hermit's answer makes the lay. Guaire died in 662. Scholars say that the poem is of the tenth century.

15. The Woman of Beare (Page 126).

In folk romance the woman of Beare is one of the four oldest living creatures in the world. But the woman whose utterance is given here is not the character out of the folk

romance—she is a courtesan like Villon's Helm-maker. This poem, Kuno Meyer says, is of the tenth century.

16. Cuchullain's Lament over Fardiad (Page 129). ✓

The combat between Cuchullain and Fardiad is, like the combat between Achilles and Hector in the Iliad, the culminating episode in the Irish epic tale, *The Tain Bo Cuiligne*. It is more dramatic than the combat between Achilles and Hector because of the fact that Cuchullain and Fardiad had been devoted friends. The story of the combat ends with these words:—

"That is enough now, indeed," said Fardiad. "I fall of that. Now indeed may I say that I am sickly after thee, and not by thy hand should I have fallen. . . ."

Cuchullain ran towards him after that, and clasped his two arms about him and lifted him with his arms and his armour and his clothes across the ford northward, in order that the slain should lie by the ford on the north, and not by the ford on the west with the men of Erin.

Cuchullain laid Fardiad down there, and a trance and a faint and a weakness fell then on Cuchullain over Fardiad.

"Good, O Cuchullain," said Laeg, "rise up now for the men of Erin are coming upon us, and it is not a single combat they will give thee since Fardiad, son of Daman, son of Dare, has fallen by thee."

"Servant," said he, "what avails me to arise after him that hath fallen by me?"

Dr. Sigerson's noble version of Cuchullain's lament seems to sum up all the chivalry and all the brilliancy of the epic tale.

17. King Cahal Mór of the Wine-Red Hand (Page 130).

Properly the title is "A vision of Connacht in the Thirteenth Century." The poem carries the impression of a period earlier than the tumultuous and destructive one that followed the Norman invasion. Cahal Mór of the Wine Red Hand was an O'Connor and was quite an historic personage; he had a romantic career.

18. Kincora (Page 132).

Brian Boru was High King of Ireland from 1000 to 1014, when he was slain by a Norse straggler after his victory at Clontarf ("The Battle of Dublin" in the Norse saga). Kincora was his chief seat—it was on the right bank of the Shannon in Clare. The lament was made by MacLiag, whom Brian had made ord-ollav or chief litterateur of Ireland. MacLiag laments the death of Brian, his son and his grandson, all of whom had perished on the day of fatal victory; he has to lament the passing of the dynasty and the ruin of what the great king's victories and policies had gained—the southern hegemony of Ireland. A spirited description of Sigurd's invasion and the Norse defeat is given in the Saga of Burnt Njal.

19. The Grave of Rury (Page 134).

This is the Roderick O'Connor of English history. After his defeat by the Normans the office of the High King was allowed to lapse in accordance with the terms of the treaty of Windsor. This king was then "Last of Gaelic monarchs of the Gael."

"Ruraidh O'Conchobhar, last king of Ireland, died and was buried in the monastery of St. Fechin at Cong, where his grave is still shown in that most beautiful and pathetic of Irish ruins. All accounts agree in this, but some have it that his remains were afterwards transferred to Clonmacnoise by the Shannon." Author's note.

20. The Shadow House of Lugh (Page 135).

Lugh is the Celtic divinity whose name is most widely known. In mythology he is the Sun God. In the mythological cycle he is the deliverer of the De Danaans from the Fomorian oppression. He is the slayer of Balor, the glance of whose eye is death. But Lugh is also kin to Balor, his mother being Eithlinn, the daughter whom Balor had immured like Danae in a tower.

21. Killarney (Page 159).

These verse make the epilogue to a long poem called "Fand" which is based on the story of the love of Fand, the Sea-god's wife, for Cuchullain and the jealousy of Cuchullain's wife, Emer. William Larminie, the poet of "Fand," had certain theories of English verse which might form a

doctrine for the free verse poets of to-day. He considered that free verse might gain by an association with the Irish system of assonance. The "Epilogue to Fand" is an interesting experiment—the poet achieves beautiful music in it through the use of assonance.

22. Clonmacnoise (Page 163).

The monastery and school of Clonmacnoise was founded by St. Kieran, the carpenter's son, about the year 544. It grew to be the greatest of the Irish universities. "Some of the most distinguished scholars of Ireland, if not of Europe, were educated at Clonmacnoise, including Alcuin, the most learned man at the French court, who remembered his Alma Mater so affectionately that he extracted from King Charles of France a gift of fifty shekels of silver, to which he added fifty more of his own, and sent them to the brotherhood of Clonmacnois as a gift." (Douglas Hyde, "A Literary History of Ireland.") Clonmacnoise contains a famous sculptured cross and many sculptured stones. It was sacked at different times during the invasions.

23. Colum-Cille's Farewell to Ireland (Page 170).

The saint is supposed to have made this poem while in his self-imposed exile in Iona. Scholars do not believe that the poems in Irish attributed to Colum-cille belong to his period—the first half of the sixth century.

24. John O'Dwyer of the Glen (Page 171).

There are many versions and many translations of this famous poem. It laments the exile of the native Irish families and also the destruction of the Irish woods. The exile and the destruction went together. The woods were destroyed, partly as a measure of safety for the planters—the woods gave shelter to the "Rapparees" and partly as a quick way of exploiting the confiscated lands. It was then that the deforestation of Ireland began.

25. A Farewell to Patrick Sarsfield, Earl of Lucan (Page 173).

Sarsfield was leader of the Irish in the wars that closed the seventeenth century. He is famous in Irish story as the defender of Limerick; his surrender of the city meant the end of organised Irish resistance for two hundred years. After that Sarsfield with most of his army sailed for France, where they took service with Louis XIV. He was killed at

the battle of Landen in 1693. As he drew from his bosom his hand that was covered with his heart's blood he said, "Would that this were for Ireland." By the way, the name Patrick or Padraic came into fashion amongst the Irish, not out of veneration of the saint, but in memory of Patrick Sarsfield.

26. Fontenoy (Page 176).

The battle of Fontenoy (1745) has always been regarded by the Irish as a national victory. The charge of the Irish Brigade flung the English back as they were on the point of putting the French to the rout. The Irish went into the battle with the cry, "Remember Limerick."

27. The Fair Hills of Ireland (Page 182).

Donnchad Ruadh MacNamara, a Munster poet, made this poem about 1730. The refrain in this particular version has nothing to do with hills. The original is sung to the noblest of Irish traditional airs.

28. The Night Before Larry Was Stretched (Page 204).

Baudelaire, one must believe, would have hailed this poem as a real Flower of Evil—the Satanic laughter is in it. It was written in the Dublin slang of the eighteenth century by some anonymous Villon. At the time there were many songs celebrating life in the gaol and the business of an execution. The coffin was usually sent into the condemned cell "that the sight might suggest the immediate prospect of death and excite corresponding feelings of solemn reflection and preparation for the awful event." The friends of the condemned man were allowed to be with him before the execution, and the coffin was generally used as a card table. There is another poem comparable to this in its harsh zest of life—the street song, "Johnny, I Hardly Knew You." But unlike the street song, "The Night Before Larry Was Stretched," shows a most accomplished artist; the unrhymed line at the end of the stanza is extraordinarily effective.

29. O'Hussey's Ode to the Maguire (Page 213).

This poem was written by the bard of the Maguires, Eochadh O'Hussey, who was one of the most distinguished poets of his time. Hugh Maguire, Lord of Fermanagh, was with Hugh O'Neill and Hugh O'Donnell in the war that came at the end of Elizabeth's reign. The poet laments the disaster of his Munster campaign. Says Dr. Hyde in his "Liter-

ary History," "when it is remembered that O'Hussey composed this poem in the most difficult and artificial of metres, the Deibhidh, . . . it will be seen how much Mangan has gained by his free and untrammelled metre, and what technical difficulties fettered O'Hussey's art, and lent glory to his triumph over them."

30. A Lament for the Princes of Tyrone and Tyrconnel
(Page 216).

Hugh O'Neill (the Earl of Tyrone of English history) had been the leader of the most brilliantly conducted war waged by the Irish against the English in Ireland. He was forced to leave Ireland in 1607; his flight meant the passing of the leadership of the Gaelic nobles and the close of an epoch of Irish history. With O'Neill went the chief representatives of the great Ulster families. The poem is addressed to the Lady Nuala O'Donnell by the bard of the O'Donnells, Mac an Bhaird or Ward. The bard is supposed to discover the Lady Nuala weeping alone over the tomb of her brother Rory in the Church of S. Pietro Montorio on the Janiculum. He imagines the whole scene transferred to Ireland (which accounts for the image of the horses' hooves trampling down "The mount whereon the martyr-saint was crucified"), and he tells her how all Ireland, and especially all Northern Ireland, would join in her grief. Never was the attachment of the Irish to their nobles revealed more poignantly than in this poem that laments the passing of the greatest and truest of the Irish families.

31. Lament for the Death of Eoghan Ruadh O'Neill (Page 223).

Eoghan Ruadh O'Neill (Owen Roe) was the nephew of the Hugh O'Neill referred to in the note above. He acquired a great reputation while in the Spanish service and he came over to Ireland to aid the Gaelic and Anglo-Irish leaders who had formed the Catholic Confederation. He had the loyalty of the Gaelic but not of the Anglo-Irish party in the war of 1641-49. He died as Oliver Cromwell unified the English command in Ireland, and it was believed that he had been poisoned. He is buried in an island in Lough Oughter in Cavan.

The utterance is supposed to be made by one of O'Neill's clansmen who is in Ormonde's camp in the south, and who hears of O'Neill's death from a messenger who has come into the camp. "The Lament for the Death of Eoghan Ruadh O'Neill" was the first ballad Thomas Davis wrote—with it he

initiated a movement in Irish verse that lasted for a long time.

32. Dirge on the Death of Art O'Leary (Page 225).

This lament, with its improvisations and its heart-rending reminiscences, is the typical Irish *Caoine*. But the sweep of personal feeling in it puts it apart from all the others. Art O'Leary, like many of the Irish gentry of the time, had been abroad; he was an officer in the Hungarian service. He married Eileen of the Raven Hair, the daughter of O'Connell of Derrynane, whose grandson was to be Daniel O'Connell the Liberator. Her parents were against the marriage. The immediate cause of the tragedy was the winning by O'Leary's mare of a race. At the time Irish Catholics were not permitted to own a horse that was worth more than five pounds. The English planter whose horse had been beaten offered O'Leary five pounds for his. He refused the offer. Thereupon he was declared an outlaw and was afterwards shot through the heart. This was in 1773. The first intimation that his wife received of the tragedy was the arrival of the mare without her rider.

33. Lament for Thomas Davis (Page 244).

Thomas Osborne Davis was one of the leaders of the Young Ireland party. He died just as his work was beginning to have an extraordinary effect. Ferguson, who had not joined the Young Ireland party, but who was in sympathy with Davis's ideas, received the news of his death while he himself was ill; many poems were written in memory of Thomas Davis, but Ferguson's is the most exalted in feeling as well as the most Gaelic in structure.

34. The Downfall of the Gael (Page 261).

This poem was written by the bard of Shane O'Neill, O'Gnive. He accompanied O'Neill to London in 1562. The poem is written in the difficult *Deibhidh* metre, the dignity of which is not reproduced in Ferguson's translation.

35. Lament for Banba (Page 264).

Banba is Ireland in the heroic aspect, as Fodhla is Ireland in the intellectual and spiritual aspect, as Eire is Ireland geographically. Egan O'Rahilly was one of the Munster poets of the eighteenth century. His poems are published by the Irish Texts Society.

36. Dark Rosaleen (Page 269).

Mangan's version is much greater than the original poem. It is supposed to be Hugh O'Donnell's address to Ireland at a time when the Irish chiefs were expecting help from Spain and from the Pope.

37. Roisin Dubh (Page 272).

"The Little Dark Rose." This poem of Aubrey De Vere's was one of a series written in time of catastrophe—during the famine of 1846-47.

✓ 38. The Irish Rapparees (Page 279).

See the note on the "Ballad of Douglas Bridge." The author of "The Irish Rapparees" makes the following note on his poem: "When Limerick was surrendered, and the bulk of the Irish army took service with Louis XIV, a multitude of the old soldiers of the Boyne, Aughrim and Limerick preferred remaining in the country at the risk of fighting for their daily bread; and with them some gentlemen, loth to part from their estates or their sweethearts, among whom Redmond O'Hanlon is, perhaps, the most memorable. The English army and the English law drove them by degrees to the hills, where they were long a terror to the new and old settlers from Limerick, and a secret pride and comfort to the trampled peasantry, who loved them even for their excesses. It was all they had left to take pride in."

39. I Am Raftery (Page 291).

Raftery, a Connacht peasant poet, while at some festivity, heard someone asking who he was. He was then blind and a fiddler. Turning around he made this perfect utterance. Raftery died in 1835. His poems have been collected, edited and translated by Dr. Douglas Hyde.

40. Night (Page 293).

Blanco White was born in Seville of an exiled Irish family.

41. Nepenthe (Page 294).

Robert Bridges makes this note upon "Nepenthe": "The Phoenix personifies the earth life of sun-joys, i.e., the joys

of the sense. She is sprung of the Sun and is killed by the Sun. It is of the essence of sun-joys to be, in their sphere, as eternal as their cause; and their personification is without ambition to transcend them. The Phoenix is melancholy as well as glad; the sun-joys would not be melancholy if they did not perish in the using: but they are ever created anew. Their inherent melancholy would awaken ambition in the spirit of man. In the last stanza *Mountainless* means 'void of ambition,' and *unechoing* means 'awakening no spiritual echoes.'"

INDEX OF AUTHORS

- A. E., 286, 308, 309
 ALLINGHAM, WILLIAM, 90, 151, 187
 ANONYMOUS, 69, 72, 74, 77, 79, 81, 83, 85, 86, 87, 88, 91, 93, 95, 98, 100, 101, 103, 105, 201, 204, 236
 BANIM, JOHN, 284
 BOYD, THOMAS, 137, 311
 BYRNE, WILLIAM A., 167
 CALLANAN, JEREMIAH J., 235, 238
 CAMPBELL, JOSEPH, 24, 30, 161
 CAMPBELL, NANCY, 336
 CARBERY, ETHNA, 136, 145
 CARLIN, FRANCIS, 51
 CASEMENT, ROGER, 301
 CASEY, JOHN KEEGAN, 299
 CAVANAGH, MICHAEL, 27
 CLARKE, AUSTIN, 117
 COLUM, PADRAIC, 29, 326
 CORKERY, DANIEL, 36
 COUSINS, JAMES H., 212, 315
 COX, ELEANOR ROGERS, 251
 CURRAN, JOHN PHILPOT, 37
 DARLEY, GEORGE, 294
 DAVIS, THOMAS, 181, 224
 DERMODY, THOMAS, 200
 DE VERE, AUBREY, 272, 287
 DUFFY, CHARLES GAVAN, 280
 EGLINTON, JOHN, 312
 FERGUSON, SIR SAMUEL, 40, 43, 141, 183, 246, 263
 FIGGIS, DARRELL, 158
 FOX, GEORGE, 192
 FOX, MOIREEN, 142
 FURLONG, ALICE, 143, 155, 327
 FURLONG, THOMAS, 172
 GORE-BOOTH, EVA, 164
 GRAVES, ALFRED PERCIVAL, 63, 138
 GRIFFIN, GERALD, 296
 GWYNN, STEPHEN, 128
 HACKETT, FRANCIS, 253
 HULL, ELEANOR, 65, 115, 121, 232
 HYDE, DOUGLAS, 23, 59, 124, 170, 210, 291
 INGRAM, JOHN KELLY, 282
 JOHNSON, LIONEL, 277, 310
 JOYCE, JAMES, 322, 323
 KETTLE, THOMAS, 248
 KICKHAM, CHARLES JOSEPH, 191
 LARMINIE, WILLIAM, 160
 LAWLESS, EMILY, 178, 179, 180
 LEDWIDGE, FRANCIS, 38, 149, 162, 255, 256
 LESLIE, SHANE, 165
 LETTS, WINIFRED, 250
 MACDONAGH, THOMAS, 34, 42, 316, 318
 MACGILL, PATRICK, 341
 MACMANUS, SEUMAS, 64
 MACNEILL, PROFESSOR, 109
 MAHONY, FRANCIS S., 169
 MANGAN, JAMES CLARENCE, 131, 133, 175, 215, 222, 265, 268, 271, 297
 MEYER, KUNO, 111
 MILLIGAN, ALICE, 274
 MITCHELL, SUSAN L., 335
 MOORE, THOMAS, 257, 283, 292
 MULLIGAN, ALICE, 285

- O'BOLGER, T. D., 122
 O'BRYNE, CATHAL, 333
 O'CURRY, EUGENE, 61
 O'KELLY, SEUMAS, 211
 O'NEILL, MOIRA, 189
 O'SHEEL, SHAEMAS, 334
 O'SULLIVAN, SEUMAS, 148, 156,
 254, 320, 321

 PARNELL, FANNY, 276
 PEARSE, PADRAIC, 239, 266, 324,
 325
 PETRIE, GEORGE, 44, 125
 PLUNKETT, JOSEPH, 278, 332

 ROLLESTON, T. W., 47, 113, 134,
 163

 SHORTER, DORA SIGERSON, 55

 SIGERSON, GEORGE, 129
 SIGERSON, HESTER, 313
 STEPHENS, JAMES, 198, 328, 330
 SWIFT, JONATHAN, 32, 195, 196,
 197

 TODHUNTER, JOHN, 241
 TYNAN, KATHERINE, 303, 304

 WALLER, JOHN FRANCIS, 57
 WALSH, EDWARD, 41
 WEEKS, CHARLES, 307
 WHITE, JOSEPH BLANCO, 293
 WILDE, OSCAR, 300
 WILSON, FLORENCE M., 146
 WOLFE, CHARLES, 243

 YEATS, WILLIAM BUTLER, 23
 49, 305, 306
 YOUNG, ELLA, 319

INDEX OF FIRST LINES

- A Bansha Peeler wint won night, 201
Adieu to Belashanny, 184
Ah, had you seen the Coolun, 39
Ah, where, Kincora! is Brian the Great? 132
A fragrant prayer upon the air, 23
Alas for the voyage, O High King, 170
All in the April evening, 304
All that was beautiful and just, 301
A pity beyond all telling, 305
A plenteous place is Ireland, 182
As I roved out on a May morning, 86
As I was climbing Ardan Mór, 162
A terrible and splendid trust, 277
At the mid hour of night, 292
At the Yellow Bohereen, 125
A voice on the winds, 310
A woman had I seen, as I rode by, 157

Because I used to shun, 331
Be this the fate, 212
Blithe the bright dawn found me, 171
Bruadar and Smith and Glinn, 207
By memory inspired, 105

Clear as air, the western waters, 134
Come all ye lads and lassies, 77
Come buy my fine wares, 31

Dark eyes, wonderful, strange and dear, 321
Did they dare, did they dare, 223
Do you remember that night? 60
Draw near to the tables, 236
Dream-fair, beside dream waters, 135

Ebbing, the wave of the sea, 126
Establish in some better way, 312

Farewell, O Patrick Sarsfield, 173
Four sharp scythes sweeping—in concert keeping, 26
From our hidden places, 147

Get up, our Anna dear, 139
 Good neighbors, dear, be cautious, 74
 Grief on the death, it has blackened, 239

Had I a golden pound to spend, 38
 Happy the stark bare wood, 155
 Have you been at Carrick? 41
 Heaven help you home to-night, 52
 He shall not hear the bittern cry, 255
 He whom a dream hath possessed, 334
 His songs were a little phrase, 316
 How hard is my fortune, 237
 How oft has the Banshee cried! 257

I am Raferty the Poet, 291
 I arise to-day, 110
 I dreamt last night of you, John-John, 33
 If sadly thinking, with spirits sinking, 37
 I go down from the hill in gladness, 309
 I grieve when I think on the dear happy days, 91
 I have not gathered gold, 324
 I hear an army charging, 323
 I heard the Poor Old Woman say, 256
 I hear the wind a-blowing, 313
 I invoke the land of Ireland, 109
 I lie down with God, 65
 I know my love by his way of walking, 79
 I know where I'm going, 87
 I'll be an otter, 326
 I met the Love-Talker one eve, 144
 In a quiet water'd land, 163
 In Cavan of little lakes, 285
 In the scented bud of the morning, 328
 In the sleepy forest where the bluebells, 116
 In the youth of summer, 161
 I rise in the dawn, and I kneel and blow, 23
 I saw her once, one little while, 297
 I saw the archangels, 336
 I speak with a proud tongue, 339
 I speak your name—a magic thing, 251
 Is there one desires to hear, 159
 It was by yonder thorn I saw, 142
 It was early, early in the Spring, 103
 I walked entranced, 130
 I walked through Ballinderry, 244
 I was milking in the meadow, 143
 I whispered my great sorrow, 320
 I will row my boat on Muckcross Lake, 314

July the first, of a morning clear, 95

Let me thy properties, 196

Like a sleeping swine upon the skyline, 165

Long they pine in weary woe, 267

Many are praised and some are fair, 180

May a messenger come from, 211

May-day! delightful day! 112

Mellow the moonlight to shine is beginning, 57

My closest and dearest! 225

My grief! that they have laid you, 249

My heart is in woe, 261

My heart lies light, 335

My love comes down from the mountain, 311

My name is Nell, right candid I tell, 72

My sorrow that I am not by, 156

Mysterious Night! When our first parent knew, 293

Naked I saw thee, 325

Not a drum was heard, 242

Now, my son, is life for you, 317

Now welcome, welcome, baby-boy, 284

O blest unfabled Incense Tree, 294

Oh, bad the march, the weary march, 176

Oh, lovely Mary Donnelly, my joy, 89

Oh, Paddy dear! and did you hear, 100

Oh, the French are on the say, 98

"Oh, then tell me, Shawn O'Farrall," 101

Oh, were I at the moss-house, 88

Old lame Bridget doesn't hear, 149

O, little green leaf on the bough, 333

O my dark Rosaleen, 269

O my land! O my love! 264

Once I was at a nobleman's wedding, 85

On Douglas bridge I met a man, 50

One that is ever kind, 306

On rainy days alone I dine, 195

On the deck of Patrick Lynch's boat, 192

O to be blind, 30

Over here in England I'm helpin', 188

Over the dim blue hills, 298

Over the wave-patterned sea-floor, 319

O who are thou with the queenly brow, 272

O woman of the piercing wail, 216

Play was each, pleasure each, 129
Pure white the shields their arms upbear, 138
Put your head, darling, darling, darling, 43

Righ Shemus he has gone to France, 279
Right rigorous, and so forth, 199
Ringleted youth of my love, 58

See, though the oil be low, 286
Shall mine eyes behold thy glory, 275
She casts a spell, oh, she casts a spell, 123
She lived beside the Anner, 190
Should any enquire about Eirinn, 93
Sleep a little, a little little, 114
Sleep, gray brother of death, 24
So endlessly the gray-lipped sea, 252
Softly now the burn is rushing, 64

Tears will betray all pride, 247
That angel whose charge was Eiré, 287
The choirs of heaven are tokened, 122
The crooked paths go every way, 329
The grand road from the mountain goes, 164
The green-hunters went ridin', 146
The house where I was born, 302
The lambs on the green hills stood gazing, 81
The lanky hank of a she, 198
The mess-tent is full, 181
The night before Larry was stretched, 204
The old priest, Peter Gilligan, 48
The purple heather is the cloak, 166
There beams no light from thy hall, 273
There is a sheeling hidden in the wood, 118
There's a colleen fair as May, 44
There's a glade in Aghadoe, 240
The stars stand up in the air, 42
The sun of Ivera, 233
The winter is past, 83
The world hath conquered, 266
They had a tale on which to gloat, 35
They have slain you, Sean MacDermott, 254
Think, the ragged turf-boy urges, 307
This heart that flutters near my heart, 322
This heritage to the race of kings, 278
Thro' grief and thro' danger thy smile, 283
To drift with every passion, 300
To meath of the pastures, 28

Up the airy mountain, 150

We must pass like smoke or live, 308

When all were dreaming but Pastheen Power, 63

When like the early rose, 295

When you were weary, roaming, 327

Where glows the Irish hearth with peat, 46

Where is my chief, my master, 213

While going the road to sweet Athy, 69

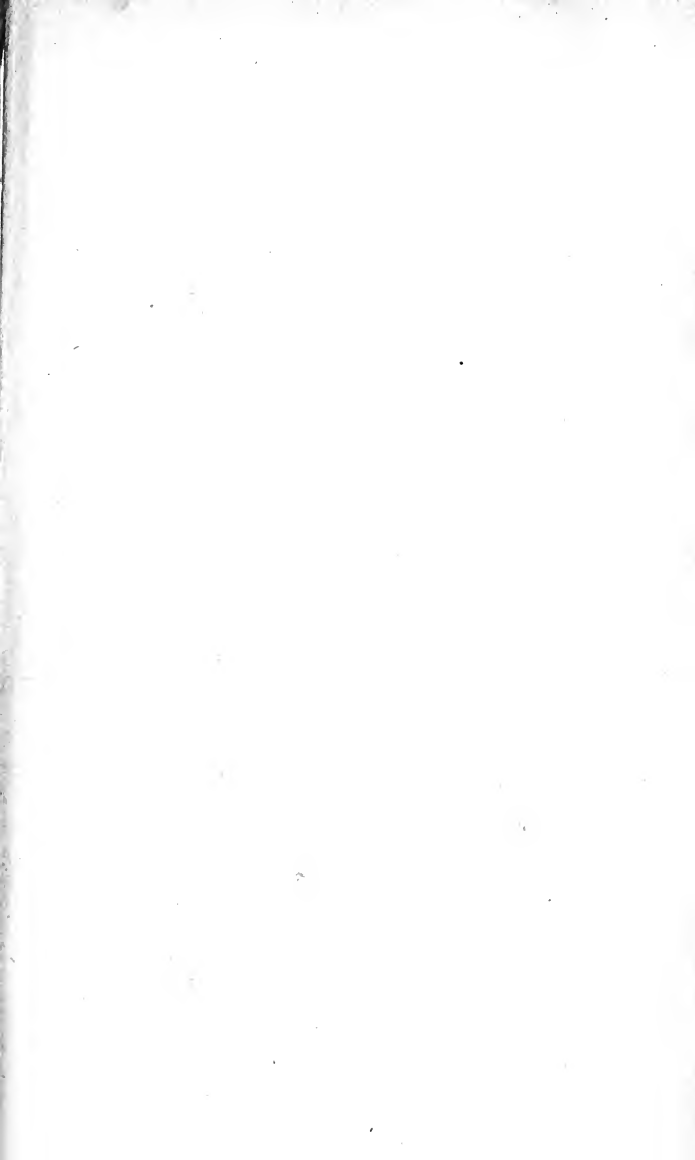
With a whirl of thoughts oppress'd, 197

With deep affection and recollection, 168

Who fears to speak of ninety-eight, 281

Who rideth through the driving rain, 137

Your sky is a hard and dazzling blue, 179







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